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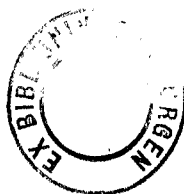
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THE 'CITIES OF THE LEVITES'  
IN JOSHUA XXI AND 1 CHRONICLES VI

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## SUMMARY

The 'cities of the Levites' have left no trace in the historical and prophetic literature of Israel; they appear only in P and Chronicles. They must then be either a fiction of the later compilers of the Law, or an earlier institution which made no great impact in monarchic times. This study therefore begins with a review of the materials of Levite history up to the Exile; the Levite cities must find a place somewhere within this setting, if they ever had any real existence.

In the second chapter we turn to survey the development of modern critical study of Joshua and Chronicles, culminating in the classic interpretations of Wellhausen and, for Chronicles, of Rothstein and Rudolph. These provide the presuppositions widely accepted by more recent scholars. We then examine and compare the texts of the two versions of the Levite city list, from a literary standpoint, and conclude that, contrary to previous opinion, the one in Chronicles represents an earlier stage in the development of the tradition than that in Joshua. There are signs that at some time the list has been re-moulded, with additions and deletions, to fit the pattern of four cities from each of the twelve tribes.

Having recognised the difficulties in supposing the list to be entirely a late invention, in the second half of this

study we try to find the Levite cities' place in history. First, the findings of archaeologists, traditio-historians and form-critics are examined. When their proposals appear not wholly satisfactory, we turn in chapter five to those who have attempted to re-appraise the character of the 'Levites' of these contexts. In pursuing this enquiry further, we reach the conclusion that these 'Levites' must be distinct both from the old secular tribe of Levi, and from the sacerdotal Levites of the Deuteronomic and Priestly literature. The 'cities of the Levites' seem to be towns which, in the second millennium, entered Israel by alliance rather than by conquest. Finally, we observe the measure of correspondence between the areas of 'Levite' and Hivite/Hurrian occupation, and raise the question whether the term 'Levite' here may not stem from a textual corruption of 'Hivite' in the Jerusalem archives.

## I THE EVIDENCE FOR THE LEVITES BEFORE THE EXILE

A study of the 'cities of the Levites' must seek to view them in their Old Testament context, and in particular in their setting in the whole history of the Levites; and to that history, such a study may in its turn hope to make some contribution. So before focussing upon our narrower subject, we shall first review what is known of the Levites before the exile.

### 1. The etymology of Levi

The origins of the name 'Levi' are obscure<sup><1></sup>. In the Biblical account of the birth of Jacob's children, Leah associates her third-born, Levi, with the hope that her husband may now appreciate her, and that their relationship may become less coldly formal than hitherto<sup><2></sup>. The name is thus derived here from the root ל<sup>ב</sup>, which is well attested in the niph'al in the sense 'be joined to', 'be attached to'. The story is not intended as scientific history, and can not be taken as giving the actual origin of 'Levi'. Von Rad speaks of "a delicate and very free etymological game in which the narrator sparkles", and of "free allusions to which the narrator is inspired by the names and which the hearers receive as ingenious"<sup><3></sup>. The same word-play is used in Num.xviii.2 and

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1. For a general review of the suggested etymologies, see E. Nielsen, Shechem, Copenhagen, 1955, pp.264ff.; A. Cody, A History of Old Testament Priesthood, Rome, 1969, pp.29f.
  2. Gen.xxix.34
  3. G. von Rad, Genesis, London, 1961, p.289

4, where the Levites are attached to Aaron for the service of the Tent of Meeting. Similarly in Ex.xxxii.26 the sons of Levi are gathered to Moses, in opposition to the rest of Israel (though a different word is used)<4>. These are late stories, and serve only to show how the name was understood in and after the monarchy. But the fact that this evidence does not go back to the actual origins of Levi does not in itself rule the etymology out of court. It remains possible that the storytellers may on this occasion have lit upon an explanation which is historically sound.

Those who favour this etymology have made various proposals about how the idea of 'adherence' originally applied. Baudissin argued that the Levites were originally the escort of the ark on its wanderings<5>. Such a view is not tenable in the light of modern criticism; P's account of the 'camp' is not historical, and Levites are not associated with the ark in the early narratives of I Sam.iv-vi and II Sam.vi. Budde offered two suggestions, one derived from the adherence of the Levites to Moses in Ex.xxxii.26ff., and the other from their possible attachment to the sanctuary of Sinai or Kadesh<6>. Dhorme compares the expression 'sons of Levi'<7> with 'sons of the prophets'<8>, and offers the rather vague interpretation

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4. K. F. R. Budde, Die altisraelitische Religion, Giessen, 3rd ed., 1912, pp.45f.; p.137 n.6
  5. W. W. von Baudissin, Die geschichte des alttestamentlichen Priesterthums, Leipzig, 1889, pp.72f.
  6. Budde, loc.cit.
  7. E.g. Num.xvi.7ff.; xviii.21; Dt.xxi.5; xxxi.9; etc.
  8. 1 Ki.xx.35; 2 Ki.ii.3,5,7,15; iv.1,38; v.22; vi.1; ix.1. (The expression does not appear in Chr.)



'associé au culte'<9>. The quest for a really convincing explanation along these lines continues.

There appear however to be two other Hebrew roots לִוּה. One is found only in rare derivatives: לוּיָה and לִיָּה, denoting some sort of ornament<10>, and לוֹיִתָן, a sea-monster<11>. On the basis of Arabic and Assyrian parallels, the root is supposed to have the basic meaning 'coil' or 'twist'<12>. Meek, following G. H. Skipwith and others, argues that the Levites had the serpent as their tribal god<13>. He does this by collecting all the passages where Moses or Aaron (regarded as Levites) performed mighty acts with a serpent, or a serpent on a pole, or a rod which turned into a serpent, or any other wonder-working wand<14>. The name of the serpent, where it appears in these passages, is from the root שָׁחַח. Secondly, he adduces "the presence of serpent names among the Levites" <15>,- Hobab, Nahshon, perhaps Shuppim, and probably (with the LXX of I Chron.xxvi.4) Nahash<16>,- and the popularity of the serpent-cult in Palestine<17>. And thirdly, he points

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9. E. P. Dhorme, La Religion des Hébreux nomades, Brussels, 1937, pp.226f.
  10. Prov.i.9; 1.Ki.vii.29,30,36
  11. Job xli.1; Pss.lxxiv.14; civ.26; Is.xxvii.1(x2)
  12. BDB
  13. G. H. Skipwith, note 'The Name of Levi', in Jewish Quarterly Review, 11, 1899, pp.264f.; E. Meyer, Die Israeliten und ihre Nachbarstämme, Halle, 1906, pp.116, 426f.; T. J. Meek, Hebrew Origins, New York, 1936; Anchor ed, 1960, pp.122ff.
  14. Ex.iv.2-5,17; vii.9,10,12,15,17,19f.; viii.1,12f.(EVV.5,16f.); xiv.16; xv.25; xvii.5f.,8-16; Num.xx.7-13; xxi.5-9; 2 Ki.xviii.4
  15. Op.cit., p.124
  16. Num.x.29; Ex.vi.23; 1 Chr.xxvi.16
  17. Cf. J. Pedersen, Israel: its Life and Culture, III-IV

to the "probable connection between the name 'Levi' and the dragon god 'Leviathan', both being derived apparently from 'lāwāh'<sup>18</sup>. One can well grant that the records of such Levite-led snake-worship would have been suppressed, in the interests of orthodoxy. But the facts are that such traces of it as remain are attached to the name 'Nehushtan' and not 'Leviathan', and that they can be related to Levi only through Moses and Aaron.

Mowinckel<sup>19</sup> takes the same etymology in a somewhat different sense: the 'twisting' is to refer to the contortions of the Levites in the ecstatic ritual dance. Such an explanation might be applied to the 'sons of the prophets' of the Elijah and Elisha stories; but there is no evidence in the Old Testament that Levites acted in this way.

The other root לָוַה means 'borrow', or in the hiph'il 'lend'. It seems to be connected with a Semitic noun whose basic form Albright conjectures as lawiyu, meaning 'a person pledged for a debt or vow'<sup>20</sup>. In Minaean inscriptions found at El-Ula in northern Arabia there is mention of male and female lawis dedicated to a god; the etymological connection with 'Levi' seems clear enough<sup>21</sup>. These texts probably date

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Copenhagen, 1940, p.711, n.2 to p.452; W. F. Albright, Archaeology and the Religion of Israel, Baltimore, 1942, p.189 n.51

18. Op.cit., p.123

19. Kadesch, Sinai og Jahve', Norsk Geografisk Tidsskrift 9, 1942f., pp.1-32

20. Albright, op.cit., p.109; cf. A. H. J. Gunneweg, Leviten und Priester, Göttingen, 1965, pp.66f.

21. D. H. Müller, Epigraphische Denkmäler aus Arabien,

from after the middle of the first millennium B.C., and may therefore be derived from developed Israelite usage, rather than giving us a glimpse of its earlier meaning<22>. Albright also refers to the Neo-Babylonian word lawûtanu which has the sense 'apprentice, clerk', i.e. pledged or articulated clerk; he regards it as a "characteristic Neo-Babylonian loanword from Aramaic"<sup>23</sup>. Though the word 'Levi' is never explicitly connected with this root in the Bible, one or two passages suggest that it was in the writer's mind. In I Sam.i.28 Hannah speaks of her child Samuel as 'lent to Yahweh'<24> for the whole of his life; and in Num.iii.12; viii.16 Yahweh is said to claim the Levites in place of the first-born of Israel, which would otherwise be due to him. However, it must be observed that these passages in Numbers are of post-exilic date; and it is not until Chronicles that we hear of Samuel as a Levite<25>. The etymology remains possible, but there is little by way of positive evidence to support it.

Two other suggested derivations have found little favour. One is that 'Levi' is a gentilic formed from 'Leah', the name of Jacob's elder wife<26>. This is in some ways attractive;

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1889, pp.42ff.; H. Grimme, Le Muséeon 37, 1924, pp.169-199; G. B. Gray, Sacrifice in the Old Testament: its Theory and Practice, Oxford, 1925, pp.242ff.

22. F. V. Winnett, 'The Place of the Minaeans in the History of Pre-Islamic Arabia', Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research 73, pp.3-9; T. J. Meek, op.cit., p.130

23. Op.cit., pp.204f., n.42

24. Heb. לָוִי לַיהוָה.

25. 1 Chr.vi.28,33; contrast 1 Sam.i.1,19f.

26. J. Wellhausen, Prolegomena zur Geschichte Israels, Berlin,

if 'Leah' means the wild cow, she would be a fitting 'mother' for the priesthood of Yahweh, whose emblem was a calf or bull<27>. The jump from לֵוִי to לֵוִי is perhaps not impossible. We seem to find a similar variation in the middle radical of לֵוִי, occasionally spelt לֵוִי<28>. And the final י masks an original י. However, it is difficult to document a connection between Levi and the bull-image, except through the late figure of Aaron<29>.

Secondly, Haupt in 1909 suggested a connection with an Arabic root lawā meaning 'give oracles'<30>. This was taken up by Mowinckel<31> and Bentzen<32>; Mowinckel however has subsequently changed his mind, and there seems to be little to commend the idea, except perhaps the mention of Urim and Thummim in connection with Levi in the 'Blessing of Moses'<33>.

De Vaux criticises all attempts to find an etymology for Levi on the ground that they set out to explain the term "as if it denoted a function," in the Bible, on the other hand,

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- 1883; E.T. Prolegomena to the History of Israel, Edinburgh, 1885, p.145; Gray, op.cit., p.243
27. R. H. Kennett, Old Testament Essays, Cambridge, 1928, p.74; O. Eissfeldt, 'Lade und Stierbild', ZAW 58-9, 1940-3, pp.190ff.
28. Cf. Is.liii.10, where לֵוִי וְרָאָה parallels יִסְיָאֵל.
29. Ex.xxxii.25-9 are a late addition to the story, and in any case show the Levites on Moses' side against the partisans of the 'golden calf'. And Jeroboam I, who set up the calf images in Bethel and Dan, is said to have expelled the Levites (2 Chr.xi.14; cf. 1 Ki.xii.31).
30. Orientalische Literaturzeitung 12, 1909, col.163
31. S. Mowinckel, art. 'Levi und Leviten' in RGK, 2nd ed. 1929. (But see ref. in n.19 above for his later view).
32. A. Bentzen, Illustreret religionsleksikon, 1950, art. 'Leviter'
33. Dt.xxxiii.8

it is given as the name of a person<34>. It could well be a shortened form of 'Levi-El', which appears in texts from Mari in the form La-wi-ili<35>, and in Egyptian as a foreign word in the form Rw<sup>h</sup>r<36>. The latter connection accords well with the presence of such Egyptian-sounding names as Hophni, Phinehas and Merari in the genealogy of Levi<37>. Even a personal name has a meaning, however, and when de Vaux suggests 'attached to God', 'client of God'<38>, he is in effect opting for a version of the first of the derivations we have mentioned.

It is difficult to make a decision on the original meaning of the name. The connection with Leviathan is unproven and far-fetched; the derivations from 'Leah' and from lāwā = 'give oracles' may perhaps be dismissed, the one as improbable on general historical grounds, and the other as inadequately supported by evidence. There remain the root meanings 'one attached', an associate or partisan; and 'one pledged for a debt or vow', a devotee. It is the more difficult to choose between these, in that their broad effect is very similar. The chief distinction is that the latter has a religious element

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34. Ancient Israel, London, 1961, p.359

35. Or La-wi-AN: J. R. Kupper, Archives Royales de Mari VI 78,18, Paris, 1954; Cody, p.33

36. W. F. Albright, The Vocalization of the Egyptian Syllabic Orthography, New Haven, 1934, p.35; M. Noth, 'Remarks on the Sixth Volume of Mari texts', JSS 1, 1956, p.327, expresses reservations. "The matter is hardly so simple as to justify one in saying tout court with Albright (op.cit., p.8 n.16): 'Hebrew Lewi is naturally a hypocoristicon of this name' (scil. rw<sup>h</sup>r)". See also M. Weippert, Die Landnahme der israelitischen Stämme in der neueren wissenschaftlichen Diskussion, Göttingen, 1967; E.T. The Settlement of the Israelite Tribes in Palestine, London, 1971, p.43 n.139.

37. J. Bright, A History of Israel, London, 1960, p.110

38. Loc.cit.

built in - the examples offered are in terms of a pledge given to a god - whereas the 'associate' might be attached either to a divine or to a human party.

There is of course a great difference between the use of a term as the proper name of a person or group - a mere label, with little to do with the subject's character - and its use to describe a class of people or objects. Nevertheless, where the proper name of the group X coincides with the description of the group Y, there will be a strong tendency to identify the two. As we shall see, it is more than likely that this has happened in the case of Levi<39>.

## 2. The secular tribe

We have seen that some explain 'Levi' as a proper name, others as in origin a description. In form it resembles, more closely than do the names of the other tribes, such gentilic terms as 'Canaanite', 'Kenite', 'Amorite' and 'Hebrew'<40>. The roots of these names are mostly lost in obscurity; some can however plausibly be traced to a geographical meaning (Amorite = Westerner<41>, Benjamite = Southerner<42>, Ephraimite = dweller on Mt Ephraim), others to a social class (Hebrew)<43>, and at least one to an occupation (Kenite = smith)<44>. Some

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39. Weippert, loc.cit.

40. De Vaux observes that the form with final -i may equally indicate a class: Histoire Ancienne d'Israël, Paris, 1971, p.203.

41. De Vaux, op.cit., p.64 and refs. in n.16.

42. De Vaux, op.cit., p.587.

43. De Vaux, op.cit., pp.202-7.

44. De Vaux, op.cit., p.499.

accordingly have regarded Levi, in the light of the later literature, as a priestly caste in its origin and essence<45>. However, there is a strong tradition in the Old Testament that at an early stage Levi was a tribe like the other tribes of Israel, without special priestly functions, its name no more descriptive than those of the other 'sons of Jacob'<46>. The locus classicus is Gen.xxxiv.25ff., where Simeon and Levi attack Shechem and thereby earn their father's displeasure, of which there is a further expression in Gen.xlix.5-7<47>. No distinction whatsoever is drawn between the two tribes, and there is no mention of any priestly activity. In a somewhat broader context, Levi is sometimes included in lists of the twelve tribes, again without distinction<48>. Noth has argued convincingly that these lists including Levi represent an earlier tradition than those which omit him<49>. The latter,

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45. G. Hölscher in Pauly-Wissowa, Real-Encyclopädie der klassischen Altertumswissenschaft XII.2, 1925, cols. 2155ff.; S. Mowinckel, art. 'Levi und Leviten', RGK, 2nd ed., 1929, vol.3 pp.1601ff.; A. Haldar, Associations of Cult Prophets among the Ancient Semites, Uppsala, 1945, p.98; H. Gressmann, Mose und sein Zeit, Göttingen, pp.211f.; Pedersen, op.cit., pp.170f.; Nielsen, op.cit., pp.278ff.
  46. In addition to the Biblical evidence, S. Yeivin finds the expression 'the district of Levi' twice in lists of Ramesses III, and 'the Negeb of Levi' in the list of Shishak I (The Israelite Conquest of Canaan, pp.24f.; texts in J. Simons, Handbook for the Study of Egyptian Topographical Lists Relating to Western Asia, Leiden, 1937)
  47. De Vaux distinguishes between the events of Gen.xxxiv and the cause of Jacob's outburst in Gen.xlix.5-7 (Histoire Ancienne d'Israël, Paris, 1971, p.492).
  48. Gen.xxix.32ff.; xxxv.23; xlvi.8ff.; xlix.3ff.; Ex.ii.2; Dt.xxvii.12; 1 Chr.ii.1; Ez.xlviii.31ff.; 1 Chr.ii.1f.
  49. Num.i.5ff., 20ff.; ii.3ff.; vii.12ff.; x.14ff.; xiii.4ff.; xxxvi.5ff.; xxxiv.19ff.; Jo.xiii-xix; xxi.4ff., 9ff. (cf. 1 Chr. vi.40ff.); Ez.xlviii.1ff. gives Levi a special place among the tribes. In 1 Chr.xii.24ff. Levi is listed as one of the tribes, but the total exceeds twelve. 1 Chr.

on his view, are influenced by the later state of affairs, when the priestly guild of Levi was quite different from the 'secular' tribes<50>.

Both views have their difficulties. Those who regard Levi as a priestly group from the start have to explain away the Genesis passages and the lists which rank Levi among the other tribes. Those, on the other hand, who see Levi as at one time an 'ordinary' tribe and at another a clerical caste, have to define the relation between the two. In Noth's view, it is simply a coincidence; the appellative 'Levite' so nearly resembled the ancient tribal name 'Levi' that the two terms, and the concepts for which they stood, came to be assimilated into the idea of a 'tribe of Levites'<51>. This does not seem unreasonable; we have seen above that 'Levi' may be derived from several different roots, and had in addition a long history of use as a personal name. Otherwise it is necessary to suppose that substantially the whole tribe was converted into a priestly group, either by a single act<52>, or by a more gradual transition. If by a single act, one would expect it to have made some impression on history. However, there is only one passage that could be held to refer

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xxvii.16ff. includes Levi and Aaron as tribes, together with the two halves of Manasseh, but excludes Asher and Gad.

50. M. Noth, Das System der zwölf Stämme Israels, Stuttgart, 1930, pp. 28ff.; Gunneweg, op.cit., pp.52ff.

51. Noth, op.cit., p.34 and note; cf. p.25 n.3; Überlieferungsgeschichte des Pentateuch, Stuttgart, 1948, p.197, n.503. Cf. W. Eichrodt, Theology of the Old Testament, E.T. 1961 p.393; Wellhausen, Prolegomena, p. 145

52. E.g. Cody, op.cit., pp.51,58.



to such an event: Ex.xxxii.25-29; and that is not sufficient to sustain such a theory. To begin with, it is a comparatively late addition to its present context<53>, and the two references to Levi are in a characteristically late phrase<54>. More important, the essence of the story is that the 'Levites' in their zeal for Yahweh turned their swords against their brethren and companions - indeed, against their sons (v.29). The division is not between tribes, but between individuals, and it cuts across the most intimate family ties<55>. The family element seems to have been toned down - the 'son and brother' of v.29 have been broadened in v.27 to 'companion and neighbour' - so that the tale might serve as an aetiology of the later priestly 'tribe' of Levi; but Gunneweg is surely right when he sees it as based on an old saying about the Levites, to the effect that they had each turned from their own kith and kin to take up a special relationship with Yahweh<56>. This is quite a different matter from the mass ordination of a complete tribe.

Those who regard Levi as originally a secular tribe, but feel there must be some continuity between this and the later priestly group, usually argue that the tribe was decimated in some sort of catastrophe, and that a substantial number of those who were left, scattered and landless, found a place in

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53. See e.g. M. Noth, Exodus, ad loc.; Cody, op.cit., pp.151f.

54. "Sons of Levi!" see below, p.30.

55. Nielsen, Shechem, p.227 n.1; Gunneweg, op.cit. p.31, rightly emphasizes that the expressions in vv.27 and 29 are not simply to be taken figuratively

56. Ibid.

various parts of Israel as specialists in priestcraft<sup>57</sup>. The two Genesis passages seem to fit happily into this pattern. In xxxiv, Simeon and Levi launch a joint attack on Shechem, and so earn the displeasure of their father Jacob. In xlix.5-7 that displeasure receives fuller expression: the two brothers are violent, and because of their accursed violence, they are to be "scattered in Israel." And so it turns out. Simeon makes no further appearance in the area of Shechem; his territory is later defined in southern Judah, into which tribe he has been effectively absorbed<sup>58</sup>. In Jdg.i he is associated with Judah in the early stages of the conquest. Perhaps with Levi - who comes between Simeon and Judah in the early lists of tribes - he penetrated to Shechem, but after an initial success they were shattered and the remnants driven back to the south<sup>59</sup>. Some of the Levites may have gone as far as Egypt, and so become associated with Moses in the exodus (indeed, Moses is said to be a Levite); or they may have secured the priesthood of Kadesh<sup>60</sup>, whence they infiltrated into the rest of Israel. Within this broad outline, a wide range of suggestions has been made, in the attempt to show how Levi could have become priestly, and how it came to be dispersed throughout the nation<sup>61</sup>.

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57. Meek, Hebrew Origins, p.124, draws a parallel with the history of the Magi. Nearer home, the Kenites seem to have specialised in metalwork.

58. Levi also seems to be associated with the south; cf. R. de Vaux, Histoire, p.493.

59. Cf. Weippert, op.cit., pp.19, 43

60. S. Mowinckel, 'Kadesch, Sinai og Jahve'

61. See C. F. Burney, Israel's Settlement in Canaan, London, 1918, pp.44f.; G. B. Gray, op.cit., pp.244ff.; Meek,

The number and diversity of these hypotheses show that none of them is really convincing. Is the evidence for a secular tribe of Levi as strong as it looks at first sight? As far as Gen.xlix.5-7 are concerned, Gunneweg argues that the saying is to be understood simply in an aetiological sense<sup>62</sup>. He holds that the author's sole concern was to explain how there came to be two 'scattered' tribes, Simeon and Levi; and that the only conclusion we can legitimately draw is that two such dispersed bodies were known to the author. "Dass der Spruch noch einen 'weltlichen' Stamm Levi kenne, wird man unmöglich diesem Text entnehmen dürfen<sup>63</sup>". He points out that in Gen.xxiv Simeon and Levi only appear for the last act of the drama, vv.25ff.<sup>64</sup>; hitherto the characters have been "the sons of Jacob" in general. Again, when they are named, they appear as a pair, with no distinguishing characteristics. It would be easy to believe that they were introduced to give colour and background to the curse on the two tribes in the "Blessing of Jacob"<sup>65</sup>. Neither of them seems to have any

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op.cit., pp.118ff.; H. H. Rowley, 'Zadok and Nehushtan', JBL 58, 1939, pp.113-141; From Joseph to Joshua, London, 1950, pp.8ff.; Cody, op.cit., pp.57ff.; R. de Vaux, Histoire, p.496.

62. Cf. G. Holscher, art. 'Levi' in Pauly-Wissowa, Real-Encyclopädie XII cols. 2160f.

63. Gunneweg, op.cit., pp.45f. Cf. Baudissin, op.cit., pp.72f.; H. Gressmann, Die Anfänge Israels, Göttingen, 1914; 2nd ed. 1922, pp.176f.; K. Möhlenbrink, 'Die levitischen Überlieferungen des Alten Testaments', ZAW 52, 1934, p.228; Nielsen, Shechem, pp.278ff.; 'The Levites in Ancient Israel', Annual of the Swedish Theological Institute 3, 1964, pp.16ff.

64. But cf. v.27

65. S. Lehming, 'Zur Überlieferungsgeschichte von Gen.xxxiv', ZAW NF 29, 1958, pp.228ff. Nielsen, Shechem, p.283, suggests

further connection with Shechem. And in any case this story does not give evidence of the defeat and decimation of Simeon and Levi, but of the Shechemites. Indeed, the scattering of Levi need not be due to military disaster; in the light of Ex.xxxii.25ff., Levites might be individuals who had chosen to break with their tribes and clans<sup>66</sup>.

These arguments, even when supported by a number of details in the Biblical narratives, seem to fall short of a convincing case<sup>67</sup>. Gen.xxxiv is a difficult passage, in terms of tradition history, and a number of views may be possible. But the opening words of Gen.xlix.5, "Simeon and Levi are brothers," invite us to regard the two as closely comparable. They must surely have more in common than the fact of dispersion. The passage attributes to them violence and wrath. This could indeed be, as Gunneweg suggests<sup>68</sup>, a negative evaluation of the 'zeal' of the Levites as seen in Ex.xxxii; but why should Simeon be included? The ways in which Simeon and Levi were dispersed were, on Gunneweg's own view, quite different; the one was submerged in Judah, as Reuben was lost in Transjordan and Dan in the north and west, whereas Levites were scattered throughout the whole of Israel, and in posts of a more or less professional character. It is very difficult to see how

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that Simeon originally stood alone here, and that Levi was introduced because of Gen.xlix.5. Von Rad, Genesis, ad.loc., favours 2 sources; cf. O. Eissfeldt, Hexateuch-synopse: die Erzählung der fünf Bücher Mose und des Buches Josua mit dem Anfang des Richter-buches, 1922, pp.23-26.

66. Gunneweg, op.cit., pp.48ff.

67. Cody, op.cit., p.38

68. Op.cit., p.46

'dispersion' could make a sufficient sole tertium comparationis for the pair of 'tribes', when they were scattered in such different ways<69>.

To maintain his theory, Gunneweg also has to explain how Levi came to be listed alongside the other tribes in such passages as Ex.i.2-4; Dt.xxvii.12f.<70> He agrees with Noth that these lists are evidence of something real in Israel's history; and that those which include Levi as one of the twelve names are earlier than the others. Then if the Levites were never a secular tribe, but were in origin a class of devotees drawn from the whole of Israel, how does 'Levi' come to be ranked among the sons of Jacob? In the construction of an eponymous ancestor Gunneweg sees no difficulty; and here no doubt he is right. He then distinguishes the lists including Levi, which he takes to represent the membership of the pre-monarchic Israelite amphictyony, from those without, which he finds to be based on the territorial divisions of Canaan<71>. 'Levi' had no tribal possession, no area of its own, so it was excluded from the latter group. On the other hand, the Levites had exchanged their family connections for a special relation to Yahweh, which would no doubt give them as a group a particular status in the amphictyony. Gunneweg's understanding of the 'devotee' Levites is in general attractive; however, although he goes out of his way to indicate that the members of the amphictyony, the 'sons of Jacob', were of diverse

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69. Gunneweg, op.cit., p.45

70. Op.cit., pp.52ff.

71. Cf. Jo.xiii-xix

character, it is again difficult to see how such Levites could be ranged alongside the other constituent groups. As in the case of Gen.xlix, it is much easier, if not absolutely necessary, to regard Levi here as an ordinary, 'secular' tribe.

In sum, then, while we must concede that the evidence is not quite conclusive, the balance inclines strongly towards the view that there once was a 'normal' tribe of Levi. Like his two elder brothers in the family of Jacob, some time before the monarchy he had sunk from the effective political scene; unlike them, the tribe was not remembered as a secular unit, because it had to share its name with another group that became prominent: the Levites. It is so difficult to trace any historical continuity between the two 'Levis' that we must assume that it was by chance that they were named alike; homonyms are not so very rare in Hebrew<sup>72</sup>. However that may be, by the time of the exile the term 'Levi' was so readily understood as denoting a sub-priestly group, that nearly all traces of its earlier meaning were obliterated; and that happened the more readily, as the Levites themselves became a hereditary order, and took on the attributes and structure of a tribe.

### 3. The Levites in the Deuteronomic History

The transition to tribal status had taken place by the time of P, in which Levi is consistently treated as the tribe of Temple ministers; and it is well attested in Chronicles.

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72. Weippert, op.cit., p.43 n.139

In the Deuteronomic writings the picture is confused. Levites are mentioned only four times in Samuel and Kings, in isolated references in widely separated contexts. In three of these passages<73>, the Levites suddenly appear as bearers of the Ark, a privilege on which some stress is laid in the latest strata of Deuteronomy itself<74>; they vanish equally suddenly without playing any further part in the action. It is safe to regard them as late insertions into the narrative. The fourth<75> is of a different kind, and has been much discussed. Among the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, we are told, was the appointment of "priests from among all the people, who were not of the Levites." This seems to be an important point in the historian's indictment. However, we can not therefore assume that it is based on good historical tradition. He has no hesitation in applying the standards of his own day to a period when those standards had not yet been recognised<76>. Further, a somewhat similar charge is made a chapter later, in the summary of Jeroboam's reign, but without any explicit mention of Levites: "After this thing Jeroboam did not turn from his evil way, but made priests for the high places again from among all the people; any who would, he consecrated to be priests of the high places"<77>. This is readily intelligible as a part of Jeroboam's programme of reform; under the united

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73. 1 Sam.vi.15; 2 Sam.xv.24; 1 Ki.viii.4

74. See below, p.30.

75. 1 Ki.xii.31

76. E.g. the assessment of earlier kings according to the Deuteronomic 'law of the one sanctuary': 1 Ki.xv.14; 2 Ki.xii.2f.; xiv.3f.; etc.

77. 1 Ki.xiii.33

monarchy, and subsequently in the southern kingdom, the monarchy and the priesthood were rapidly established on hereditary lines strongly influenced by the Canaanite pattern, whereas in the north the element of charisma was slower to die. This is shown by the more vigorous prophetic movement there in the ninth and eighth centuries; the less stable dynasties; and also perhaps in this passage, in Jeroboam's readiness to ordain those who offered themselves for the priesthood, regardless apparently of birth and class. An editor who believed that the Levites had an exclusive right to this office might well have interpreted such a passage in the light of his own views, making it clear that Jeroboam's action was improper; his nominees were ineligible for the priesthood, because they were not of the tribe of Levi. So in this verse also it is likely that we owe the mention of Levites to a late editor<sup>78</sup>.

If that is the case, then in the original text there was no mention of Levites throughout the Deuteronomic history of the Monarchy; and only in the appendices (xvii-xxi) do they appear in the book of Judges. This contrasts with their prominence not only in P and Chronicles, but also in Joshua and in Deuteronomy itself.

#### 4. The Levites in the Deuteronomic Code:

##### (i) Stratum A

When we turn to Deuteronomy, we find three distinct

78. Cf. J. Gray, I and II Kings, London, 1964; 2nd ed. 1970, ad loc.



treatments of the Levites, embedded in three clearly recognisable strata of material<79>. For convenience, let us call them stratum A, stratum B and stratum C. 'A' comprises the collection of short pieces of law in Dt.xxi-xxv. This material shows a general resemblance, in style and layout, to the "Book of the Covenant," although in Deuteronomy the 'casuistic' form is not so dominant. Since Ex.xxi-xxiii are generally regarded as earlier than Deuteronomy, we have here an indication that the laws may be preserved in an older form than in the longer and smoother paragraphs of B and C, whose breadth and continuity bear more resemblance to the manner of the priestly writer.

It is noteworthy that in 'A', as thus defined<80>, Levites are mentioned only in xxi.5 and xxiv.8. In each case the reference is to Levitical priests; and it is likely that both verses are later additions to their context. xxi.5 makes no contribution to the account of the ritual of the heifer, in which it is set, but introduces matter which is totally extraneous if not actually inconsistent. The action is performed entirely by the elders of the city concerned. In particular, it is they who utter the formal prayer for forgiveness; if any priests were present, surely this task would fall to them. It is just conceivable that the prayer was to be made by the priests in the name of the elders; but the simple and direct manner of the paragraph makes so

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79. Cf. Nielsen, Shechem, pp.267ff.; Gunneweg, op.cit., pp.26ff.; etc.

80. It may be that some of the material in xixf. and xxvi should be included in 'A'.

sophisticated an interpretation implausible. It is easier to regard verse 5 as an interpolation, asserting the claim of the later Levitical priesthood to take the leading part in settling disputes, and to pronounce Yahweh's blessing. We shall see that the language of the verse relates it naturally to stratum C.

With xxiv.8f. the case looks different. This is a short, self-contained law, in a context of similar material. It enjoins implicit obedience to the Levitical priests in an attack of leprosy, and reinforces the command by reference to the fate of Miriam. There is nothing here that obviously rings false. However, when we look closely at the surrounding verses, we see that they enjoy a certain unity of theme. After two laws about marriage, both to modern eyes somewhat bizarre, we come to a series of straightforward safeguards against oppression. Necessary domestic implements are not to be taken for debt; enslavement of an Israelite is treated as a particularly heinous form of theft, punishable by death; and further provisions to prevent the rich making life impossible for the poor, - the debtor must at least have the use of his bedding; the wage-earner must be paid promptly (because he is on the verge of starvation). The chapter rolls to its close with calls for justice: justice for the individual, and something more generous than mere justice for the sojourner, the fatherless and the widow. The more one studies this chapter, and its neighbours, the less appropriate do Levitical regulations about leprosy appear. Nor is it only the subject

matter that is out of line. The phraseology is typical, but typical of another part of Deuteronomy. Where else in stratum A is one bidden to "take heed . . . to do" anything? Where else is one told to do what the priests direct? The subject matter of xxiii.10f., for example, could easily have been couched in such terms. Finally, Miriam makes no other appearance in Deuteronomy. The paragraph seems, then, to be another editorial insertion. One would be completely happy with this verdict, if any explanation were forthcoming why the insertion had been made.

So stratum A resembles the "Book of the Covenant" not only in its general form, but also in apparently containing no original reference to Levite or priest<sup><81></sup>. This is no great cause for surprise, since the subject matter is concerned rather with civil than with cultic matters; nevertheless, we may note that the administration of justice is in the hands not of priests or Levites, but of judges and elders<sup><82></sup>.

(ii) Stratum B

Stratum B, comprising most of Dt.xii-xvi and xxvi, presents

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81. If xixf. and xxvi contain 'A' material, then the mention of priests (but not Levites) in xix.17, xx.2 and xxvi.3f. must be taken into account. Of these, the first is doubtful, since the priests seem to have no active part to play in the proceedings of xix.15ff.; in v.18, the judges act alone. If the others belong in 'A', as is likely in the case of xxvi.3f., then we have some evidence that 'A's priests were not Levites.
82. Dt.xxi.2-6,19f.; xxii.15-18; xxv.2,7-9. Cf.xvi.18; xix.12,17f. In xvii.9,12 mention is made of 'the judge who is in office in those days', who stands alongside the (Levite) priests.

a very different picture. To begin with, instead of short independent laws, we find here large orderly blocks of material: xii, the sanctuary and its sacrifices; xiii, heresy; xiv, food laws, tithe feasts; xv, finance, industrial relations, profits tax; xvi, festivals; appendices<sup>83</sup>; xxvi, liturgies for the offering of first-fruits and of the third-year tithe<sup>84</sup>.

Secondly, although we did not find it very remarkable if stratum A contained no mention of priests, it is surely something of a tour de force to legislate about the one legitimate sanctuary, sacrifice, religious orthodoxy, and the sacred festivals, without any mention of the priesthood whatever. This strongly contrasts with the style of P, who can scarcely complete a verse of Leviticus or Numbers without a reference to the sacred ministry. The point emerges in high relief in Dt.xxvi.1-11. Verses 3f. give a shorter and no doubt older account of the procedure for offering first-fruits, which is set out in greater detail and with a fuller creed in the surrounding verses. Each account starts with the approach to the sanctuary, and ends with the laying of the offering before the altar (except that the longer version adds a verse

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83. xvi.21f. and xvii.1 seem to be introduced to cover points omitted in the main treatment. xii.3 speaks of burning alien Asherim, but an Asherah at the 'chosen place' is not expressly forbidden there. Similarly, nothing has actually been said hitherto about the impropriety of sacrificing blemished animals, except in the case of firstlings (xv.21). xvi.18-20 is an altogether more substantial addition, introducing for the first time the whole field of administration of justice (the theme of many of the following chapters of the Code) and referring to the appointment of "judges and officers." Elsewhere in 'B', mention of officials seems to be carefully avoided.

84. Vv.1f., 5-15.

about rejoicing before Yahweh). There can be no doubt that they are parallel accounts, nor that the longer one belongs to our stratum B. And whereas the other speaks of going to the priest, and making a formal declaration to him, whereupon he, the priest, takes the offering and lays it before the altar; in the B version the worshipper goes to "the place which Yahweh your God shall choose," pronounces his creed "before Yahweh," and himself sets his offering down "before Yahweh."

If it is remarkable how priests have been excluded from 'B', it is even more surprising how Levites make their appearance there. They are found ten times<sup><85></sup>, but not as members of a tribe like the other tribes, nor in the more or less priestly role they fulfil elsewhere. In these chapters they are consistently presented as paupers, bracketed with the landless alien, the orphan and the widow, and commended to the generosity of the Israelite householder. They are to be taken to the sanctuary along with the family, the servants and the other dependants, when tithes are to be offered and enjoyed, or when a festival is to be celebrated with its attendant feast; and every third year the whole tithe is to be devoted to entertaining locally "the Levite, because he has no portion or inheritance with you, and the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow, who are within your towns."

It emerges clearly that there may be Levites in any town in the land; and that, in many cases at least, they are

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85. xii.12,18,19; xiv.27,29; xvi.11,14; xxvi.11,12,13.  
Gunneweg, op.cit., pp.26ff.

landless and more or less dependent on charity. In the light of their position elsewhere in the Bible, one is tempted to assume that they are here a depressed priestly group. However, there is no suggestion whatever in these chapters that they exercise, or have any right to exercise, priestly functions. Nor can such a suggestion be carried over from a previous passage; this is their first group of appearances in the book<sup>86</sup>. To the contrary, their position as worshippers at the shrine, alongside other lay men and women, gives as clear an indication as could be (short of an explicit statement) of their non-priestly status. True, their position was not in one sense precisely the same as that of the widow and orphan. They were deliberately introduced into these contexts by the author or editor. In xxiv.17,19 and 21 (stratum A) we have specimens of an older version of the formula, which spoke only of "the sojourner, the fatherless and the widow." The Levites, then, are newcomers to this company. In introducing them thus, the writer reveals nothing of their previous history; least of all does he indicate that they ever had any priestly pretensions. In view of the subject matter of these chapters, we are bound to conclude either that he had no reason to believe they possessed a priestly character, or that it was part of his purpose to conceal or deny the fact.

(iii) Stratum C

Stratum C embraces the passages where the Levites are

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86. Apart from x.8f., which is probably a later addition (see e.g. von Rad, Deuteronomy, E.T. London, 1966, p.79)

assigned a priestly role<87>. We come upon the first of these suddenly, and without any preparation, in xvii.9. This is the first mention of priests in the Deuteronomic Code, and the first mention of Levites as priests in the Bible<88>; but no explanation is given here. Indeed, there is another passing reference in v.18, before we come to a full statement or definition of their position in xviii.1: "the priests the Levites, all the tribe of Levi." It is possible that we owe it to an editor, that this idea leaps upon us so suddenly in xvii. In v.9, "the priests the Levites, and the judge who is in office in those days," constitute a court of appeal; three verses later, in the same context, it is "the priest who stands to minister there before Yahweh your God, or the judge," who compose the court. In xix.17, in a similar context, we find the comparable expression "the priests and the judges who are in office in those days;" but this is resumed simply by "the judges," in the next verse. One may guess that this material has been through a number of revisions, with priestly and Levite interests at work. If so, 'C' comes from a late stage in the process. This is confirmed by the fact that almost every mention of the Levites in a late Deuteronomic setting, - in the framework of the Code<89>, and elsewhere in the Deuteronomic literature, - bears the stamp of 'C'<90>.

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87. xvii.9,18; xviii.1f.,6-8; xxvii.9; xxxi.9,25; also x.8f., and perhaps xxvii.14. xxxiii.8ff. will be treated separately.

Cf. Jo.iii.3; viii.33; xiii.14,33; xiv.3f.; xviii.7; xxi.

88. That is, this is the first reference to the Levites in general as full priests (except for the late insertion, Dt.x.8f.). In Numbers, they appear as subordinate ministers; only certain members of the tribe are priests.

89. See refs. in n.87.

90. The exceptions are Jdg.xix.1; xx.4; 1 Ki.xii.31; and

In xvii.18 we find a reference to a law-book in the possession of the Levitical priests. This is mentioned again in xxxi.9, where we learn that it was among the principal duties of "the priests the sons of Levi" to carry the Ark<sup><91></sup>. In his description of the Levites as guardians of the Ark and of the Law, and also in his introduction of the genealogical expression "sons" (or "tribe") "of Levi"<sup><92></sup>, the writer has come close to the standpoint of P; it is possible that in x.8, and perhaps in xxxi.25, he has omitted the term 'priests' in recognition of the post-exilic distinction between Aaronite priests and the rest of the 'tribe' of Levi. If so, we should no doubt distinguish a fourth stratum D, in which the Levites are 'sub-priestly', and are more explicitly presented as a 'tribe'. This would not however affect the main drift of our argument<sup><93></sup>.

The three (or four) strata are not distinguished only by their treatment of the Levites. They differ in their literary characteristics, and in the concepts they exhibit. For instance, the 'name-theology' quoted as characteristically Deuteronomic belongs to 'B'. Here we repeatedly meet such phrases as "the place which Yahweh your God will choose, to

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probably Jo.xxi.

91. The Ark appears only in the 'framework' of Deuteronomy: x.8; xxxi.9,25. Cf. 1 Sam.vi.15; 2 Sam.xv.24; 1 Ki.viii.4.
92. xxxi.9; cf. x.8; xviii.1; xxi.5; (also Ex.xxxii.26,28). Hertzberg also notes the distinction between 'Levites' and 'tribe of Levi': H. W. Hertzberg, Die Bücher Josua, Richter, Ruth, Göttingen, 1953, 2nd ed. 1959, p.117
93. On the new status claimed for the Levites in the latest stratum of Deuteronomy see Cody, op.cit., pp.137ff.



make his name dwell there<sup>94</sup>. In 'C' texts, the 'name' is the authority by which a priest or prophet exercises his ministry<sup>95</sup>. And in 'A', as we should expect, 'name' is used in simpler, untheological senses, of a person's reputation, or the memory that lives after him<sup>96</sup>. Again, in 'B' the term 'choose' is used specially of Yahweh's selection of a place for his shrine, as we have just seen<sup>97</sup>. 'C' sometimes follows this usage<sup>98</sup>, but also speaks of Yahweh's choice of people<sup>99</sup>. In 'A' the word occurs only once, of the escaped slave's choice of a place to live<sup>100</sup>.

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94. xii.5,11,21; xiv.23,24; xvi.2,6,11; xxvi.2. For the whole of this paragraph, see also the wider references in M. Weinfeld, Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic School, Oxford, 1972, pp.324f.
95. x.8; xviii.7,19,20,22; xxi.5
96. xxii.14,19; xxv.6,7,10
97. In addition to the references in n.94 above, see xii.14,18,26; xiv.25; xv.20; xvi.7,15,16
98. xvii.8,10; xviii.6; xxxi.11
99. xviii.5: "For Yahweh your God has chosen him out of all your tribes, to stand and minister . . ." Cf. xvii.15; xxi.5 (see pp.23f. above); also iv.37; vii.6f.; x.15.
100. Analysis of the vocabulary gives some further support to the distinction of stratum 'A'. S. R. Driver, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Deuteronomy (p.lxxxiv), lists a number of words found only in Deuteronomy. As far as chs.xii-xxvi are concerned, these appear mostly in the 'A' stratum. xiv, because of its subject, has occasion to introduce lists of unusual animals, of which four do not appear elsewhere (under these names). Leaving them aside as a special case, there are fourteen terms peculiar to Deuteronomy in xxi-xxv; four of them are found in the remaining ten chapters of the Code, where four other listed terms also appear. A number of the words come more than once; there are eighteen occurrences of such terms altogether in xxi-xxv (3.6 per chapter), and twelve elsewhere in the Code (1.2 per chapter). If they are sufficiently numerous to mean anything at all, they must represent elements of the vocabulary of the sources of Deuteronomy which had fallen out of use by the time the later books of this school were composed. They are supported by a few longer expressions also found preponderantly in 'A', and not outside the Code; e.g. "So shalt thou exterminate the evil" (xii.6(5);

To sum up: in 'A' we have no technical use of 'choose' or 'name', no mention of Levites, and little if any of priests. In 'B' there is 'chosen place' and 'name' material, Levites appear alongside widows and orphans, and there are no priests<101>. And in 'C', alongside 'chosen place' we find 'chosen person' or 'people'; the 'name' theology has vanished; and Levites and priests both appear, either in apposition, or perhaps sometimes in the relationship they occupy in P<102>.

##### 5. The Levites in Deuteronomy xxvii

Two passages in Deuteronomy which concern the Levites remain for consideration, because of their special character. One is xxvii,9-14, where within half a dozen verses we come upon (i) "Moses and the priests the Levites," (ii) Levi as one

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xvii.7,12; xix.19; xxi.21; xxii.21,22,24; xxiv.7); "And it be sin in thee" (xv.9; xxiii.22(21); xxiv.15; cf. xxi.22; xxiii.23(22)); לֹא תִוָּכַח (יִכָּל) = thou (he) mayest not (xii.17; xvi.5; xvii.15; xxi.16; xxii.3,19,29; xxiv.4; but also vii.22). Cf. Driver, op.cit., pp.lxxviiiiff. So here we have a somewhat tenuous indication that the 'A' stratum stands closest to the source material; subsequent editors have tended to thin out these expressions where they found them in the traditions they reworked, and have not introduced them in their own composition.

101. In fact, there are no officials in 'B' at all: no priests, elders or judges. The Levites here have no public functions, and the prophet in xiii.1-5 is treated as a private individual. (By contrast, the prophet of xviii.15ff. is a public figure, the successor to Moses).

102. Cf. Nielsen, Shechem, pp.267ff.; Gunneweg, op.cit., pp.26ff.; and for other interpretations of the position of the Levites in Deuteronomy, Wellhausen, Prolegomena, pp.141ff.; C. Steuernagel, Das Deuteronomium und das Buch Josua, Göttingen, 1900, ad loc.; G. E. Wright, 'The Levites in Deuteronomy', VT 4, 1954, pp.325ff.; G. von Rad, Deuteronomium-studien, Göttingen, 1948; E.T. London, 1953, pp.66ff.; J. Emerton, 'Priests and Levites in Deuteronomy', VT 12, 1962, pp.129-138; Cody, op.cit., pp.125ff.

of the twelve tribes, and (iii) the Levites taking a leading part in a cultic act. The paragraph comes in the middle of a disjointed chapter, and seems itself not to be all of one piece. In v.1 the speaker is "Moses and the elders of Israel," in v.9, "Moses and the priests the Levites," in v.11, Moses alone; and finally it is the Levites who pronounce the twelve curses of vv.15ff. Each of these changes of speaker, with the possible exception of the last, seems to represent a fresh start, unconnected with what has gone before. Vv.9f. make a self-contained pericope of 'C' material, repeating ideas and phrases typical of the 'framework of the code' <103>. Vv.11-13, on the other hand, are reminiscent only of xi.26ff. There too Mounts Gerizim and Ebal are named for blessing and curse. Here, in addition, the twelve tribes are ranged six on each mountain. This list would appear to go back to early times, since it includes Levi as one of the twelve, with Joseph in place of Ephraim and Manasseh. It is also very likely that the twelve curses that follow are rooted deep in the past. But it is practically impossible that they should belong together, as they now stand. For we are told there are to be blessings and curses. Curses there are, in set form; but where are the blessings? Those at the beginning of xxviii are too few, and of different form, and separated from the curses by a late introductory formula. In any case, we should expect the blessings to precede the curses; and all the more, because the final curse seems to form a conclusion. Indeed,

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103. Cf. e.g. xxvi.16-19; vii.6ff.

it appears to give the twelve clauses the force of a dodecalogue, referring to them as "the words of this law"<sup>104</sup> ; it is difficult to see how blessings could aptly be joined on, before or behind. And finally, why should the twelve tribes be divided into two groups, if they are all to speak with one voice? It is probably simplest to regard vv.14-26 as having been inserted at some stage into this superficially appropriate context. Perhaps an earlier and briefer form of xxviii was the original sequel to v.13<sup>105</sup>. If so, the "Levites" of v.14 belong in a different context from "Levi" in v.12. They are still, however, attached to an apparently early passage. If the curses do date from the early monarchy, and the Levites are the original speakers, then this is the earliest evidence we have found for Levites as cultic officials<sup>106</sup>. But there are many elements of uncertainty. These 'Levites' are not embedded in the (presumably) ancient material, but in its introduction, or 'framework'; and most of the framework of this chapter is of a late date<sup>107</sup>.

#### 6. The Levite oracle in the Blessing of Moses

The remaining Levite passage in Deuteronomy comes in the

104. Weinfeld, op.cit., p.147

105. Ibid., and following page

106. G. von Rad, Das fünfte Buch Mose: Deuteronomium, Göttingen, 1964; E.T. London, 1966, pp.166f., conceives vv.12f. and 14-26 as the remains of two different ceremonies performed at Shechem in early times; when they were combined, the first was truncated. He regards the 'Dodecalogue of Shechem' as, in essence, "the most ancient series of prohibitions preserved for us in the Old Testament."

107. xxvii.1-11 are full of phrases characteristic of the framework to the Deuteronomic Code; e.g. "this day", "the

'Blessing of Moses', ch.xxxiii. This is a series of oracles on the various tribes, among whom Levi has a place (vv.8-11). But he appears to be a priestly person or group, from the references to Urim and Thummim (v.8), and to the ministry of torah and sacrifice (v.10). Three questions have to be answered: Is this oracle a homogeneous unit? What is its date, or dates? And did it originally refer to Levi?

Firstly, the oracle is not all of a piece. Verses 8-10 differ from the rest of the 'Blessing' in content, orthography and metre<sup>108</sup>. They are fairly homogeneous in substance, although there is a grammatical shift from singular to plural in v.9 which has exercised the commentators. The allusion to Massah and Meribah (v.8) is also obscure<sup>109</sup>. In the other references to these places, the main parties to the dispute were Yahweh and Israel<sup>110</sup>. Moses was present, and was to some extent held responsible for Israel's rebellion.

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words of this law," and the emphasis on keeping Yahweh's commandments.

108. "In 8-10 there is a complete break in style, meter and content with the rest of the poem. The relative pronoun (asher), the sign of the definite accusative (et-), and the article, all suspicious in ancient poetry, occur in these lines. The poetic structure is dubious, and 9 at least seems to be largely prose. Significant from the point of view of the writers is the absence of tenth-century spellings and archaic forms in this passage, while the surrounding verses abound in both. How much, if any, of 8-10 belongs to the original blessing must remain a question. The passage is rejected in toto as a late addition by some scholars." (F. M. Cross (Jr.) and D. N. Freedman, 'The Blessing of Moses', JBL 67, 1948, pp.203f., n.28). Cf. Cody, op.cit., pp.117ff., who however regards v.8 as old.
109. See R. de Vaux, Histoire, p.494.
110. Ex.xvii.7; Num.xx.13,24; xxvii.14; Dt.vi.16; ix.22; xxxii.51; Pss.lxxxii.7; xcvi.8; cvi.32; cf. Ez.xlvii.19; xlviii.28

But it is somewhat fanciful of Wellhausen to regard Moses as the one 'tested' in v.8, and as here representative of the tribe of Levi<111>. Even if we discount the fact that, as the text now stands, Moses is depicted as the one pronouncing the oracle, who could scarcely allude to himself in the third person in a representative capacity, the fact remains that in the story as we find it elsewhere it was not Moses but the people who were tested,- and found wanting. Here, on the other hand, we have the impression that a priestly person or group has come through the trial with flying colours. The following words, v.9, suggest that the situation envisaged was like that of Ex.xxxii.26-9, where the "sons of Levi" rallied to Moses and turned against their neighbours and relatives, thus earning their ordination to the priestly service of Yahweh. If there is here an allusion to such a story, it continues to the middle of v.9, where the number changes from singular to plural. This change is accompanied by one of substance, from graphic, narrative imagery to more general and prosaic explanation. Verse 10 seems to relate to the duties of the priesthood as they were understood around the time of the exile, whereas vv.8f. refer rather to the zeal of the devotee<112>, and the mention of Urim and Thummim suggests an early date<113>. Gunneweg, pursuing his thesis that the Levite of early times

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111. Prolegomena, p.135

112. On the וְיִסָּדֵם of v.8a see Gunneweg, op.cit., pp.38f.

113. Or a very late one. There is no other mention of the sacred lot between the early narratives about Saul (1 Sam.xxviii.6; xiv.41, LXX and Latin verss.) and the Priestly writers (Ex.xxviii.30; Lev.viii.8; Num.xxvii.21; cf. Ezra ii.63; Neh.vii.65)

was one who left home and clan to serve Yahweh, regards v.9ab as the kernel of the passage, and v.10b as the latest addition<114>.

Verse 11 more closely resembles the other oracles in this chapter. It may well have constituted the original blessing of Levi; we may compare it with Gen.xlix.5-7, which show that Levi was subject to hostile criticism<115>. In itself, it could well relate to a secular tribe. Gunneweg takes it as evidence that Levi's claim to sole occupation of the priesthood, late in the monarchy, did not go unopposed; as we have observed, it would be at least equally appropriate to a much earlier time, when Levi was a 'secular' tribe with a reputation for violence.

But was this oracle originally about Levi? In the masoretic text, the name appears only in the introduction, "And of Levi he said:." These words need not date to any time before the chapter was put together in its present form, presumably towards the end of the composition of Deuteronomy. The poem itself begins with a crisp slogan: "Thy Thummim and thy Urim for thy devotee!" The following references to Massah and Meribah suggest that the 'devotee' might be the whole of Israel; the Massah-Meribah traditions which survive elsewhere are in terms of a tension between Yahweh and the people. Again, v.11 is of very general reference. But certainly by

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114. Op.cit., p.43. Cf. Wellhausen, Prolegomena, p.135.

115. G. E. Wright, Interpreter's Bible II, New York, 1953, p.530; Cross and Freedman, loc.cit., n.29; Cody, op.cit., p.35

the time v.10 was incorporated the oracle was applied to a priestly group, and the similarities of v.9 to Ex.xxxii.25ff. indicate that the Levites were here in mind. It is scarcely possible to make any radical distinction between v.8 and v.9; these verses, with v.10, must be taken as a coherent unit, composed perhaps in stages, but consistently related to the Levites. Even if they are of late (exilic?) date, one must suppose that there was a good reason why they were inserted at this point in the collection of oracles. This must mean that v.11 was at that time traditionally held to refer to Levi. There is no obvious reason why such a reference should come to be attached to this verse, if it were not the original author's intention. So the connection with Levi is probably deeply rooted in this verse also, and is not the importation of a late editor.

It appears, then, that this passage in the 'Blessing of Moses' contains elements from various periods from the beginnings of the monarchy until after its fall. If they all relate to the same body, a single continuous 'tribe of Levi', then we have here some evidence to connect the later sacerdotal guild with the Levites of the early period. But it is beset by too many uncertainties to bear much weight.

#### 7. The Levites in Deuteronomy: summary

Taken as a whole, the evidence of Deuteronomy concerning the Levites is complex and difficult to fit into an ordered scheme. There is a solitary reference to Levi as one of the



twelve tribes<116>, which tends to confirm the conclusion we drew from Gen.xxxiv and xlix, that it had once been no different from the others. The early laws make no mention of Levites; they appear suddenly in xii-xvi as dependants, alongside widows and orphans, and equally suddenly change into priests in the following two chapters<117>. In the latest passages they are sometimes referred to in genealogical terms, as the 'sons' or 'tribe' of Levi, and are conceived as holding much the same position as in the Priestly Code, with responsibility for the ark and the Law<118>. If our stratum A may be assigned to the mid monarchic period<119>, and stratum B to the seventh century<120>; and if, finally, the lists of tribes which include Levi date to the very beginning of the monarchy, or before<121>,- then there is a silence concerning Levi which extends almost the full length of the monarchy. This silence is perhaps broken in Deuteronomy by two doubtful voices: the reference in xxvii.14 to Levites in a cultic role, which is difficult to date, but might be early; and the oracle in the 'Blessing of Moses', which seems to span the history of the 'tribe' from its original, secular state to its claim to full priestly dignity. In the oracle, as we observed above, the reference to Urim and Thummim suggests antiquity; it is however

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116. xxvii.12f.

117. On xviii.6-8 see below, pp.53f.

118. x.8; xvii.18; xxxi.9,25

119. On the grounds of its general resemblance to the Book of the Covenant.

120. This I take to be the basic new material of the Deuteronomic Code, which has been associated since the time of De Wette with the reform under Josiah.

121. M. Noth, Das System der zwölf Stämme Israels, Stuttgart, 1930.

scarcely conclusive, as they reappear in Ezra and Nehemiah<122>. Nor does the connection of thought between Dt.xxxiii.9 and Ex.xxxii.25-9 point to an early date, since the latter is a late addition to the story of the 'Golden Calf'<123>. It would be attractive to think of the 'secular' tribe as vanishing, and its place being taken by the 'Levites',- a class of individuals, like the prophets, who left their families in order to follow some sort of religious vocation, and came at one stage of history to claim for themselves the sole right to the priesthood. Of the existence of such a class in the period of the monarchy we have found hints, but so far no solid evidence has been forthcoming; unless the strength of the Levite faction in the priesthood, which suddenly appeared at about the time of the exile, may be held to prove that it had roots stretching back into earlier years. On the other hand, the central stratum of Deuteronomy presents the picture of Levites requiring patronage, and especially at the festivals, where they take no leading part and seem to have no professional or vocational status. This is quite incongruous, if they were priests. Gunneweg stresses their position as 'sojourners', gerim<124>. This does seem to be the impression the Biblical author intends to give. The only possible indication that these Levites might have been in fact more priestly than they appear, would have to be drawn from the reluctance of these chapters to mention any official at all, whether king, judge,

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122. Ezra ii.63; Neh.vii.65

123. Cf. e.g. Noth, Exodus, ad loc.

124. Op.cit., esp. pp.26ff.

priest or elder; but that would be an extreme argumentum e silentio<sup>125</sup>.

#### 8. The Levites in Joshua and Judges

The references to Levites in most of the book of Joshua fit in with the pattern we have found in Deuteronomy. In the first half, we twice meet "the priests the Levites" bearing the ark, as in stratum C<sup>126</sup>. In the second, apart from xxi, the tribe appears only as ineligible for an allocation of territory; Yahweh is its portion<sup>127</sup>. It is a priestly group which is considered genealogically, as in the latest parts of Deuteronomy, and in P. We shall of course be treating xxi below.

125. See n.101 above. For other views of the position of the Levites as portrayed in Deuteronomy, see the references in n.102 above.

The attempts by Staerk and Steuernagel to use the variations between second person singular and plural as a criterion for detecting sources throughout Deuteronomy have not found wide favour. There has been greater success in applying this analysis to the later 'framework' sections which precede and follow Dt.xii-xxvi. Since however we are not primarily concerned with these sections, and the method seems to make no contribution to our subject, we have not devoted space to it here. See W. Staerk, Das Deuteronomium. Sein Inhalt und seine literarische Form, Leipzig, 1894; C. Steuernagel, Der Rahmen des Deuteronomiums, Halle, 1894; Die Entstehung des deuteronomischen Gesetzes, Halle, 1895; 2nd ed. Berlin, 1901; Deuteronomium und Josua, Göttingen, 1900, pp.IIIff.; and for his later modified view, Lehrbuch der Einleitung in das Alte Testament, Tübingen, 1912, pp.174ff. For more recent studies see the bibliography in the excellent article by G. Minette de Tillesse, "Tu" et "Vous" dans le Deuterome', VT 12, 1962, pp.29-87. A more negative evaluation of the method is to be found in O. Eissfeldt, The Old Testament, Oxford, 1965, pp.175f., 226ff.; G. Fohrer, Introduction to the Old Testament, London, p.170.

126. iii.3; viii.33 (a reinterpretation of Dt.xxvii.11ff.)

127. xiii.14,33; xiv.3f.; xviii.7

There remain two passages in the Deuteronomic corpus, one of which offers to illustrate the Levite as a religious figure in very early times. These are the two stories appended to the book of Judges, in xviii, and xix-xxi. They both relate to the period before there was a king in Israel<sup><128></sup>, and the former presents a Levite as a recognised religious figure. A section of the plot revolves around his status as a man of God. All Micah needs to know about him, before he offers him a post as priest, is that he is a Levite from Bethlehem in Judah<sup><129></sup>. And the story culminates in his founding the priesthood of Dan<sup><130></sup>.

However, when we look more closely we see that the story is not all of a piece. Older commentators discussed whether it was based on two source documents<sup><131></sup> (which might perhaps be equated with J and E)<sup><132></sup>, or whether the inconsistencies and duplications were due simply to successive editorial hands<sup><133></sup>, - "the disorder occasioned by these being aggravated,

128. xvii.6; xviii.1; xix.1; xxi.25

129. Jdg.xvii.9f.; cf. v.13

130. Jdg.xviii.30

131. W. Vatke, Die biblische Theologie, Berlin, 1835, p.268; E. Bertheau, Das Buch der Richter und Rut, Leipzig, 1845, 2nd ed. 1883, pp.241f.; J. Wellhausen, Die Composition des Hexateuchs und der Historischen Bücher des Alten Testaments, Berlin, 2nd ed. 1889, pp.363ff.; K. F. R. Budde, Die Bücher Richter und Samuel, ihre Quellen und ihr Aufbau, Giessen, 1890, pp.138-144; G. F. Moore, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Judges, New York, 1910, pp.367ff.; C. F. Burney, The Book of Judges with Introduction and Notes, London, 1920, 2nd ed. 1930, pp.408ff.; G. A. Cooke, Judges, Cambridge, 1913, p.157.

132. Budde, Moore, Burney, opp.citt.

133. R. Kittel, Geschichte der Hebräer I.2, Gotha, 1892, p.19; H. Oort, 'De Heiligdommen van Jehovah te Dan en te Bethel voor Jerobeam I', Theologisch Tijdschrift 1, 1867, pp.288f.;

as is often the case, by corruption of the text and secondary glosses<sup>134</sup>. More recent scholars leave more room for the development of the story at the oral stage; Hertzberg, for instance, finds the two-source theory unjustified, as a whole, but still has to reckon with signs of literary conflation in the opening and closing passages and in xvii.7<sup>135</sup>. In this verse at least, he joins the earlier critics who had seen the 'Levite' as belonging to only one of the basic strands<sup>136</sup>. It seems that at different times the story has been used to illustrate various points. Among others, it has the character of a foundation-legend of the sanctuary at Dan<sup>137</sup>. Subsequently, Hertzberg suggests, it may have been re-told from the Judahite point of view, so that the Danites appear little better than robbers, and their sanctuary is presented as the shrine of a man-made idol served by a priesthood of worthless credentials.

Noth reaches a similar conclusion on quite different grounds<sup>138</sup>. He sees the story as adapted in favour of the

A. Kuenen, Historisch-kritisch onderzoek . . . van de boeken des Ouden Verbonds, pp.358-60; Wellhausen, Composition, pp.232ff.; cf. pp.356f.; F. Nötscher, Richter, Würzburg, 2nd ed. 1955, p.66; M. Noth, 'The Background of Judges xvii-xviii', in Israel's Prophetic Heritage, ed. B. W. Anderson and W. Harrelson, New York, 1962, pp. 68-83; cf. A. Murtonen, 'Some Thoughts on Jdg.xviif.', VT 1, 1951, pp.223f.

134. Moore, op.cit., pp.366f.

135. Hertzberg, op.cit., pp.238ff.

136. Cf. e.g. Burney's analysis, loc.cit. Cody holds that xvii.7-13 require no such analysis, and that the whole story is very old (op.cit., p.52ff.)

137. Noth (op.cit., pp.69f.) identifies three themes: (i) the cult object finally erected in Dan; (ii) the 'Levite' from Bethlehem; (iii) the Danite conquest of Laish. Cf. also Noth, System, p.168.

138. Op.cit., pp.81f.

royal sanctuary of Dan established by Jeroboam. Apparently the older shrine, whose diminutive statuette and dubious priesthood are here held up to ridicule, still had its adherents. However, it is by no means clear that the story was at any stage intended to discredit the Danites. Noth and others emphasise the disgraceful and treacherous conduct of the young priest, in betraying his benefactor and running off with his gods. They do not quote the parallel case of Jacob, who also ran away with his employer's gods, together with his daughters and a good part of his possessions<sup><139></sup>. It is true that the scandals of the Jacob and Laban story have been largely explained away, to suit a later and more sophisticated morality. The hero had earned the girls and the goods, we are to understand, and he did not know about the gods. But the primitive skeleton of the story is the same. Jacob receives credit for "outwitting" Laban and getting away with his property<sup><140></sup>. Similarly, Micah's priest's cave-man ethics may not have seemed so shocking to an early audience as they do to us. At some later stage, a glossator chose to hang on this story a statement about the old 'Gershomite' priesthood of Dan, which, he claims, continued in existence until the fall of Samaria<sup><141></sup>. As Noth himself points out, it is clear enough that this editor did not consider the story discreditable.

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139. Gen.xxi.

140. Gen.xxi.20. V.43 is now presented as the plaintive self-justification of a defeated bully. I suspect, however, that it indicates the true situation in the original form of the story.

141. Jdg.xviii.30. See Noth, op.cit., pp.83f., esp. n.42, and p.70, n.6.

In this verse (30) the 'hero' of the story is shown as a descendant of Gershom, one of the Levite clans. Earlier, he is referred to repeatedly as a Levite. However, the impression of a Levite emphasis in the story as a whole comes largely from xvii.7-13, which contain almost all the occurrences of the term within these two chapters. It appears in xvii.7,8,11,12 and 13; elsewhere it comes only in two isolated verses, xviii.3 and 15. This uneven distribution through the story is not governed by the subject-matter; the young priest figures in xviii.3-6,15-20,24,27 and 30. This last verse gives the man's name, his clan, and his descent from Moses<sup>142</sup>, apparently to validate the Danite priesthood, and would surely have mentioned his Levite status if that had been known and valued when the verse was composed<sup>143</sup>.

It is in this same paragraph, xvii.7-13, that we learn that the 'Levite' came from Bethlehem<sup>144</sup>; otherwise we might

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142. Altered to "Manasseh", perhaps to discredit the sanctuary (cf. Hertzberg, *op.cit.*, p.242)

143. Gunneweg, *op.cit.*, pp.20ff., emphasises that this fragment of Jonathan tradition does not make him a Levite; cf. O. Eissfeldt, 'Lade und Stierbild', *ZAW* 58-9, 1940-3, pp.203f. Noth on the other hand argues for a connection between the Gershom of Jdg.xviii.30 (representing the Danite priesthood) and the Levite clan of Gershon. Gunneweg points out that in Jo.xxi Dan is in the Kohathite area, but he overlooks the fact that this is the old, western territory of the tribe. The northern city of Dan, where Jonathan ministered, is adjacent to Naphtali and eastern Manasseh, which contributed their 'Levite cities' to Gershon.

It is generally agreed that Jdg.xviii.30 is secondary; if 'Gershon' is the Levite clan, the addition was probably made during or after the exile, and possibly at the same time as the 'Levite interest' was introduced to the story. However, it remains unlikely that the verse should have been put in to support a Levite faction, without any explicit mention of Levi.

144. It is possible that the connection of the 'Levite' with

have assumed that he came from Dan (where there were a number of 'Levite cities'). How else could the Danites have recognised his voice, - unless they knew him personally<sup>145</sup>? It is less plausible that they heard him intoning the familiar sacred office. This seems to be definitely ruled out by the questions they asked in xviii.3b. Even though, as the text now runs, they seem to have recognised him as a Levite, they did not at once assume that he would be in a priestly post. To the contrary, they asked what his position was; and we get the impression that he had something of a tale to tell about how Micah had come to make him his chaplain.

This story seems to have been taken up with relish by a later propagandist for the priestly rights of the Levites. He had no difficulty in touching up the scene to give the impression that any Levite would be accepted without question as priest in an Israelite house. This was done largely by adding v.13, which spells out the moral; and by modifying vv.10-12, which now contain a double account of how the young man became Micah's priest. It reads a little oddly, that in v.10 Micah invites him to "be to me a father and a priest," and in the following sentence this 'father' "became to him like one of his sons." Some duplication and repetition is natural to narrative style, but one cannot avoid the impression that here there are two strands in a certain tension. According to one, a young man was invited into Micah's house, won his

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Bethlehem has been transferred to ch.xvii from the following story, as a stock description.  
 145. Burney, ad loc.



confidence, and was made his priest<146>. On this is imposed the account of Micah's joy when a Levite came his way, a fully qualified priest, who could secure for him Yahweh's blessing.

This impression is the more readily entertained, since the term 'Levite' seems to have no deep root in most of the contexts where it occurs in this story. In xvii.7 it is part of a clumsy double appendix to the sentence: "...and he was a Levite and he was a sojourner there<147>. In v.9 Micah asks "Where do you come from?" The answer "I am a Levite" is irrelevant; "I am from Bethlehem" is to the point. The last two words of the MT of v.10 are a corrupt duplication of the opening of v.11<148>. In the latter, the subject would be obvious, even if it were unexpressed. In xviii.3 and 15 "the Levite" is in apposition to "the young man," and so is grammatically redundant. Only in xvii.12aa and 13 is "the Levite" firmly woven into its context. Of these two sentences, the one is entirely superfluous, since its substance is repeated in the following clause; and the other relates only to the "Levite interest." The story as a whole would have no less point if all the references to a 'Levite' were removed. In the broad context, xvii.7ff. set the scene for the treachery of xviii.20 and Micah's complaint, v.24<149>. Neither at this point of

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146. One can well imagine that the post might be an honour for a guest-lodger, but a chore of which a son would be glad to be rid.

147. For possible emendations of the last clause of v.7 see Burney and Hertzberg, op.citt., ad loc.

148. Burney, op.cit., pp.423f.

149. See above, p.44. The pathos of this scene does not seem to mar the narrator's enjoyment of the 'outwitting'

climax, nor anywhere in the final dénouement with the founding of the city and shrine of Dan, is it mentioned that the priest had Levite status<sup><150></sup>. It seems therefore a reasonable conclusion that no Levite played any part in the original story, but that the concept was introduced subsequently as a sub-plot with its focus in v.13. The way in which this was done, by adding odd words or clauses with little if any adaptation of the context, points to a literary rather than an oral process. It would seem natural to assign the 'Levite' hand to the late Deuteronomic period, a time of literary activity<sup><151></sup>, when the position of the Levites was under lively discussion. The 'Levite interest' might go some way to explain how the story came to be appended to the Deuteronomic collection of tales of the Judges.

If we are right, then, the apparent Levite content of xviif. evaporates under analysis into the additions of a late writer. We shall have occasion to study the following story in a later chapter. For the present it will suffice to state briefly that there is no suggestion that the Levite of xix.1 and xx.4 was any sort of 'man of God'. If he had enjoyed any such sacrosanctity it would surely have been mentioned as aggravating the crime of the men of Gibeah. The fact that he could call the amphictyony to war is remarkable, and suggests that in some respect he was of more than normal stature; but

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of the Ephraimite.

150. Similarly, there is no Levite element in the story of Jacob and Laban.

151. E.g. the formation of the Deuteronomic corpus and the books of Jeremiah and Ezekiel.

it no more proves his priestly character than it does in the case of Saul, who called Israel to arms in a similar way<sup><152></sup>.

On the other hand, if this Levite was not a 'man of God', neither does he appear to have been a normal member of a flourishing tribe. This is indicated in three ways, none of them conclusive, but producing a cumulative effect. First, the man is a 'sojourner' in the territory of another tribe, and takes a wife from yet another. Secondly, his tribe takes no leading part in avenging him; in fact, Levi is not mentioned at all. And third, he is referred to in both places in a phrase found nowhere else, אִישׁ לֵוִי, 'a Levite individual'. One may surmise that 'Levi' is not here the name of a tribe, but of some other group or class. However that may be, it appears that Levi as a tribe is no longer a force to be reckoned with by this time.

#### 9. Other evidence

We find then that the Deuteronomic History tells us nothing definite about the Levites between the eleventh century B.C. and the seventh. What about our other sources for this period? The pre-exilic prophets are silent on the subject. One late passage in Jeremiah refers to them<sup><153></sup>, and a single verse at the end of Isaiah<sup><154></sup>. We are left with Ezekiel, the Priestly Code, and the Chronicler. Of these, only Ezekiel offers a useful contribution to our present theme. The

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152. 1 Sam.xi.5ff.

153. Jer.xxxiii.18-22

154. Is.lxvi.21

understanding of the Levites to be found in P and in the Chronicler's writings reflects the circumstances of the postexilic period. Some earlier genealogical material may be embedded in these corpora, e.g. Num.xxv.58; 1 Chr.v.27 (Evv.vi.1)ff.; but such information has to be evaluated and interpreted by reference to such an outline as we are now trying to construct. 1 Chr.vi.39(54)ff. will be treated in the following chapters, together with Jo.xxi.1-42. The passage in the remaining writings which might be held most relevant to our present purpose is Ezra viii.15ff., where Ezra complains of the lack of Levites in the party he was to lead back to Jerusalem, and seeks "ministers for the house of our God" from "Iddo and his brethren the temple servants." This may or may not be derived from authentic memoirs of Ezra; but even if it were, it would reflect conditions far removed in time and place from the Israelite monarchy<155>. One could scarcely deduce from this passage, or from Ezra ii.40-58 (cf. Neh.vii.43-60) in the 'list of returned exiles', that there had been an elaborate infrastructure of Levites assisting the Jerusalem priesthood by the end of the seventh century B.C.

In Ezekiel, the references to Levites all come in the last half dozen chapters<156>. These are among the latest parts of the book; they appear to be roughly contemporary

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155. The term מִשְׁתָּמְרִים, here translated "temple servants", denotes one of the functions, or types of post, held by various branches of the 'tribe of Levi' after the exile. It occurs frequently in Ezra and Nehemiah and once in Chronicles (1.ix.2), but nowhere else.

156. Ez.xliii.19; xliv.10,15; xlv.5; xlviii.11,12,13,22

with the latest elements of the Deuteronomic literature, and with P. Since Wellhausen, the following sequence has been widely accepted: Deuteronomy claims the priesthood for the Levites; Ezekiel proposes that they be made subject to the Zadokite priests, because of their errors; P legislates for them as an accepted group, or range of groups, subordinate to Aaron<sup>157</sup>. If this sequence is correct, then the relevant passages (or, strictly speaking, concepts) in Ezekiel must date from not too long after the exile. They will then give us crucial evidence that some Levites, at least, really were priests in Israel before the exile, alongside the Zadokites<sup>158</sup>. Further, Ezekiel seems to class all the Levites together; they all "went astray," and they are all consigned to a subordinate ministry in the Temple. This makes it hard to believe that there can have been two types of 'Levite' in the Josianic period, one with and one without the priesthood. So we should be driven to concede that, by the time of the fall of Jerusalem, Levites were priests; and, priesthood being a most conservative institution, it would be likely that the roots of Levite

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157. Wellhausen, Prolegomena, ch.IV, esp. p.124. He infers from the prescriptions in Ezekiel and P that the Jerusalem priesthood successfully resisted the claims of the provincial clergy to an equal ministry at the central sanctuary. Cf. the summary in Gunneweg, op.cit., pp.118f.

158. xlv.10-14; xlviii.11. This last verse makes a simple distinction between 'sons of Zadok' and 'Levites' (not 'sons of Levi'); the references to the family of Zadok as 'Levite' may well be due to Deuteronomic influence, or possibly to the scheme found in P, where all branches of the Temple ministry are included in the genealogy of Levi.

It is not so clear in the text of Ezekiel as Wellhausen would wish (Prolegomena, p.123), that the Levites who led the people astray were the ministers of shrines outside Jerusalem. Cf. Ez.viii.5ff.



priesthood extended some distance into the past. This would lend colour to Ezekiel's assertion that the Levites had led the people astray - an expression suggesting a process over a period of time; it would make the Deuteronomic claim that all Levites were priests a statement of fact, rather than a mere programme or demand; and it would enable us to date Dt.xxxiii.8-10 to the last centuries of the monarchy, if we saw cause to do so. But the difficulties also are substantial. Apart from the silence of our datable pre-exilic sources on the Levite priesthood, there are the positive questions how in fact an established national priesthood became disfranchised, and why a reform engineered by Levites should have as one of its main objectives the closing of all the Levites' sanctuaries.

Others see this material in Ezekiel as being closely related to <159>, or even later than, P<160>. In that case it would be like P itself, too remote in time, if not also in place, to have any value as evidence of institutions under the monarchy. We may then believe, with Gunneweg, that the Levites were a class of people which never did, as a whole, reach the priesthood. This avoids all the difficulties of the Wellhausen position; there is no Levite priesthood for the sources to mention, or to be deprived of its status, or to do itself out of its livelihood. But other questions arise. When, and

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159. E.g. A. Weiser, Einleitung in das Alte Testament, 1948; 4th ed. 1957; E.T. London, 1961, p.228

160. H. Gese, Der Verfassungsentwurf des Ezechiel, Berlin, 1957; Gunneweg, op.cit., pp.188ff.

above all why, were Aaron and Zadok - representing, as Gunneweg believes, the established priesthoods of Bethel and Jerusalem - incorporated into the genealogy of Levi? And what is Dt.xviii.1-8 all about?

To this last point Gunneweg offers an answer. The passage falls into two distinct parts. The first is from the latest Deuteronomic stratum, and is concerned with the Levite claim to the priesthood; it sets the late, theoretical explanation of the landlessness of Levi alongside a brief traditional account of the income due to the priests. Verses 6-8, on the other hand, speak only in terms of 'Levites', not priests, and relate rather to our stratum B. These then are the Levites who live in the provincial towns. They may come to Jerusalem whenever they wish - normally, one would presume, at festivals - and may then join with their brethren in some unspecified cultic acts. Gunneweg sees no suggestion that they should take up permanent residence in the capital<sup>161</sup>. The "priests of the high places" of the "cities of Judah," of 2 Ki.xxiii.8f., are quite different. These are the people who lost their livelihood in the process of centralisation. In spite of the polemic of the Deuteronomic law against the high places, Josiah brought these men to Jerusalem; but of course they did not officiate at the altar there.

One is left here with the question, in what sort of

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161. He would presumably be unhappy with the RSV translation of the obscure closing words of v.8, "besides what he receives from the sale of his patrimony," which suggests that the Levite left his provincial home for good.

capacity the Levites of xviii,7 served before Yahweh in Jerusalem. And are their "brother Levites" other visitors, or do they include residents in the capital? Do they even include the priesthood of the Temple? Gunneweg suggests, with some hesitation, that they do. In his view, The association of the Levites with the amphictyony, and all that it stood for in Israelite tradition, was so secure and intimate that the Aaronite priesthood of Bethel<sup>162</sup>, at least, had earlier claimed Levite status<sup>163</sup>; and at some time the Zadokites must have done the same<sup>164</sup>. Although, as he believes, the Levites were bitterly opposed to the institution of a multiplicity of Yahweh sanctuaries with a royal or Canaanite flavour, such as the Aaronites and Zadokites served; yet their claim to the priesthood on the one hand, and their opponents' wish to present themselves as the truly Israelite ministry, irresistibly tended to merge the two parties into one priestly 'tribe'. Of this 'tribe', some actually possessed the priesthood; others only claimed priestly rights. And so arose the distinction within Levi between 'priests' and 'other Levites', fully developed in P.

Gunneweg's treatment of Aaron and Zadok depends on his understanding of such difficult texts as Ex.iv.13ff.; viii.4,24 (EVV.8,28); ix.27f.; and xxxii; where various interpretations and dates are possible. But if we accept the outline of his reconstruction, as it has been sketched above, then there were

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162. Cf. R. H. Kennett, Old Testament Essays, pp.74ff.

163. Gunneweg, op.cit., pp.95ff.

164. Op.cit., pp.98ff.



already before the time of Josiah both Levites in priestly office, and others who held no such position, but performed some functions (which we can not define clearly) as devotees of Yahweh.

The question, What were the Levites during the monarchy, remains open to many answers. Some time before that period we believe there was a secular tribe of Levi, Simeon's 'brother'. And we are not short of information from the post-exilic period. In between, there is darkness and confusion, and even the comparative blaze of illumination in Deuteronomy serves only to heighten the difficulties. Somewhere in this darkness are set the 'cities of the Levites', if the traditions preserved in Jo.xxi and 1 Chr.vi have any historical value. It may be that the two lists of cities have some light to shed on the nature of the early Levites. They must in any case be considered in the context of the history of 'Levi', of which some account has been given in this chapter.

In this chapter we survey the findings of the classic literary critical school of Old Testament study, as they relate to the texts bearing on the Levite cities. The chief passages are:

- (a) Jo.xxi.1-42<1> (sometimes simply called 'Jo.xxi' below), the priestly account of Joshua's allocation of cities to the Levites.
- (b) 1 Chr.vi.39-66 (vv.54-81 in the English versions and some Septuagint MSS), a similar text set in a context of genealogies instead of historical narrative;
- (c) Num.xxxv.1-8, the priestly account of Moses' instruction to give cities to the Levites;
- (d) Lev.xxv.32-4, the special jubilee year provisions relating to Levite cities.

# 1. The material in Joshua and the Pentateuch

## (a) Critical study in the nineteenth century

In the nineteenth century, the growth of modern literary analysis of the Old Testament was vigorously opposed by such conservative scholars as K<sup>u</sup>onig, H<sup>u</sup>avernick and Keil. They felt that it was somehow unfit for the glory of God that the

1. I follow the numbering of BH and EVV. Some editions of MT omit vv.36f. and renumber the following verses accordingly.

Law should have been committed to writing by any but Moses, and the Conquest by any other than Joshua. Some concessions were indeed made to the rationalist spirit of the age, particularly over the book of Joshua, which was felt to be perhaps less central to the revelation of the will of God. König<sup>2</sup> granted that the account of Joshua's own death might have been appended by another hand, and Keil<sup>3</sup> went so far as to suppose that the whole book might have been written by a younger contemporary of the hero, an eye-witness of the events, some twenty-five years after they took place. On the unity of the work they stood firm<sup>4</sup>. Only a handful of trivial glosses might be allowed. This was a difficult position to hold, in view of the irregularities of style and subject-matter, which were pointed out assiduously by the opposing school. Many of the arguments used on both sides now appear trivial. The critics, for instance, harped on the absurdity of allocating thirteen cities to the descendants of Aaron, who was only one generation older than Joshua<sup>5</sup>. To

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2. J. L. König, Alttestamentliche Studien I: Authentie des Buches Josua, Meurs, 1836
  3. C. F. Keil, Commentary on the Book of Joshua, E.T. Edinburgh, 1857
  4. König, op.cit. Keil, op.cit., p.3: "A useful examination of the contents of the book . . . (which) furnishes incontrovertible evidence of its unity throughout." F. J. V. D. Maurer, Commentar über das Buch Josua, Stuttgart, 1831 and H. A. C. Hävernich, Handbuch der historisch-kritischen Einleitung in das Alte Testament, Erlangen, 1836-49 conceded that the second half of the book incorporated a number of earlier independent pieces. Cf. L. Bertholdt, Historischkritische Einleitung in sämtliche kanonische und apokryphische Schriften des alten und neuen Testaments, Erlangen, 1812-9, III; E. Meyer, "Über die Bestandteile und die Oeconomie des Buches Josua", in Ammon und Bertholet, Kritische Journal 2 pp.337ff.
  5. E.g. Bertholdt, op.cit. p.851; Maurer, op.cit.

this Keil replied, (i) that the 'cities' were probably not very large; (ii) that the Aaronites would not be the only inhabitants; (iii) that it would be unworthy of divine providence not to allow ample room for the clan to expand (several of the cities in question remained in Canaanite hands for some time); and (iv) that, as it was 123 years since Aaron's birth, the fifth generation of his descendants might have seen the light by the time of the allocation. Aaron himself had two surviving sons, each of whom had twelve male heirs; if these and their successors had a mere six sons each, there would be some 6,000 male Aaronites ready to occupy their cities. Even if most of these were in their infancy, there would be easily seventy-five families for each allocated town<6>! No allowance is made for daughters, nor for deaths in infancy; and no mention is made of the number of wives each man would need to maintain this rate of multiplication. (Otherwise the sixth son of the twelfth son would be a generation younger than his eldest cousin). In a later edition of his commentary, Keil leaves the fifth generation out of account, but otherwise maintains his argument unaltered<7>.

The conservatives' logic was not always of this dubious quality. Their concern for the Scriptures led them to a scrupulous and thorough study and knowledge of the text, and much of what they say is of permanent value. Their opponents laid themselves open to the charge of exceeding the evidence,

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6. Keil, op.cit., pp.451f.

7. C. F. Keil and F. Delitsch, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, Leipzig, E.T. Edinburgh, 1869, p.211

even from those who were sympathetic to their approach to Scripture<sup>8</sup>. Their 'over-confident dogmatism' may be illustrated by a couple of Ewald's assertions about the Deuteronomist. After arguing that Deuteronomy was not complete without an account of the work of Joshua, the royal figure who put into effect the covenant set out by Moses, he continues: "But certain as it is that the life of Joshua was made public by the author at the same time with the new-moulded life of Moses, it is also evident that his object as writer was thereby fully attained; and it is neither capable of proof nor even credible that he treated in his peculiar manner the history of any later period<sup>9</sup>". This proposition, so 'evident' to Ewald as to require no discussion, is now widely doubted, and Noth has gone some way towards demonstrating that the books of Judges, Samuel and Kings are as Deuteronomic as the book of Joshua. Ewald continues: "That the Deuteronomist had read and made use of the historical work to which the Fifth Narrator gave its latest form, is certain<sup>10</sup>". (This 'historical work' is the Tetrateuch, in practically its present form). He supports this assertion in a brief footnote: "Not only is the narrative of Ex.xxxii-xxxiv repeated step by step in Dt.x, but also that of Num.xxii-xxiv is certainly presupposed both by Jo.xxiv.9 and by Mic.vi.5; and further proofs of the same might be given." Now it is clear that in both these examples

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8. F. Bleek, Einleitung in das alte Testament, Berlin, 1860; 4th ed. by Wellhausen, 1878; E.T. of 2nd ed. (1865), London, 1869, p.287

9. H. Ewald, Geschichte des Volkes Israel, Göttingen, 1843; 3rd ed. 1864-8; E.T. London, 1867, p.125

10. Ibid.

the Deuteronomist is alluding to stories already known to his readers; however, there is no obvious literary dependence on the form in which these stories are told in Exodus and Numbers. (Ewald's 'step by step' is an exaggeration). And it was not many years before Wellhausen had proved, to the satisfaction of most subsequent scholars, that the boot was on the other foot; the priestly work, corresponding broadly to Ewald's 'Book of Origins', was not the first but the last major contribution to the Hexateuch. The Deuteronomist did not draw on P; P might on occasion refer to Deuteronomy<sup>11</sup>.

However, in spite of the weakness of some of the positions they adopted, and notwithstanding their disagreements among themselves, the 'critical' school made headway. In the course of the nineteenth century it came to be widely agreed that the Pentateuch and Joshua were composite works, and that certain basic strands, or documents, could be traced through all six. Until Wellhausen, it was generally held by such scholars that the basic form of the Hexateuch was laid down by the priestly author, and subsequently modified in a series of 'editions'<sup>12</sup>. Over the number and sequence of the editions, and the proportion of new material composed by the editors themselves (as distinct

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11. J. Wellhausen, Prolegomena zur Geschichte Israels, Berlin, 1883; E.T. Prolegomena to the History of Israel, Edinburgh, 1885, pp.369ff.
  12. E.g. J. G. Eichhorn, Einleitung in das Alte Testament, 2nd ed. Leipzig, 1787; 4th ed. Göttingen, 1823-4, III pp.302ff.; W. M. L. de Wette, 'Dissertatio critico-exegetica', 1805, in his Opuscula, Berlin, 1833; Lehrbuch der historisch-kritischen Einleitung in die Bibel, Berlin, 1817, 5th ed. 1840; E.T. Boston, 1850; H. E. G. Paulus, Theologisch-exegetisches Conservatorium, Heidelberg, 1822, pp.149ff.; Bleek, op.cit., p.287; Ewald, op.cit., pp.64ff.

from that which they incorporated from other extended sources or brief records), there was room for a wide variety of views. But all converged on a final Deuteronomic redaction, either by the author of Deuteronomy himself, or (as Ewald preferred) by a close follower. This sequence was encouraged by the course of Israelite history. First Moses pronounced the Law; then the prophets preached it and expounded it against the background of current events; and lastly, before the Exile, it was given new life and authority under Josiah. De Wette had drawn attention to the relation between Deuteronomy and the reforms of the late seventh century<sup><13></sup>; and the similarities in spirit and teaching between the eighth century prophets, and what we know as the JE material, did not go unobserved. So the stilted priestly diction was interpreted as primitive, and its refinement of doctrine taken for authenticity<sup><14></sup>; the greater vigour, colour and freedom of the JE writers was attributed to prophetic fervour, the development of literary art, and remoteness from the events described<sup><15></sup>; while the stereotyped formulae of Deuteronomy were taken, at least by Ewald, as a sign of Silver Age decadence<sup><16></sup>. This is indeed an attractive scheme. One may perhaps suspect that the

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13. Op.cit., vol.II pp.153f.

14. E.g. Ewald, op.cit., pp.75ff.

15. Ewald, op.cit., pp.100ff. His 'Fourth Narrator' treats history "with all possible freedom", being prepared to tell of Mosaic sacrifices before Moses, and the use of the divine name before it had been revealed. In literary technique, "the fragments of this narrator exhibit a culmination and mature development of all the intellectual powers and capacities of the ancient nation, which can hardly be surpassed."

16. Op.cit., pp.115ff., esp. p.125

critics' perceptions were most acute when it suited their purpose - a widespread human failing! Bleek, who regarded himself as holding a central, moderate position between the critical and conservative camps, comments scathingly on Hengstenberg's<sup>17</sup> attempts to show a relationship between Hosea and Amos, and Deuteronomy: "Nothing which he produces in this respect is at all tenable, or in any way probable"<sup>18</sup>. Hengstenberg was of course anxious to show the priority of Deuteronomy, and Bleek to deny it. It does not seem to have occurred to either of them that the dependence might be the other way; though a good deal of evidence has been produced more recently to show that Hosea at least was a pioneer in the stream of tradition which blossomed in Deuteronomy<sup>19</sup>. Or again, Dillmann, writing after Wellhausen had sharpened the tools of critical study, seems to say that Jo.xx expanded Num.xxxv.1-8 without reference to Dt.iv.41-3, and could therefore belong to the basic priestly source (his 'A') responsible for this part of Numbers<sup>20</sup>. He still held the view that the Deuteronomic contribution was made much later. Now it is true that Dt.iv.43 names Moses as allocating the three eastern cities of refuge, whereas the book of Joshua ascribes all six

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17. E. W. Hengstenberg, Beiträge zur Einleitung ins Alte Testament, Berlin, vol. III 1839; E.T. of III, Dissertations on the Genuineness of the Pentateuch, Edinburgh, 1847, pp.107ff.

18. Bleek, op.cit., p.374

19. H. W. Wolff, 'Hoseas geistige Heimat', 1956, in Gesammelte Studien zum Alten Testament, Munich, 1964, pp.232-250. Cf. also A. C. Welch, The Code of Deuteronomy, London, 1924; A. Alt, 'Die Heimat des Deuteronomiums', 1953, in K.S. II, 1953, pp.250-275

20. Die Bücher Numeri, Deuteronomium und Josua, Leipzig, 1886, p.568



to its hero. (This discrepancy might, on the presuppositions of the earlier critics, be due to 'Deuteronomic licence' - a tendency of the later writer to ascribe long-established institutions to the earliest and most eminent author, in ignorance or disregard of the facts.) But there remains a very close literary parallel between Dt.iv.43 and most of Jo.xx.8, which should not be brushed aside without a word of explanation.

(b) Attribution to sources

But while the critics might disagree on many points in their literary analysis of the Pentateuch and Joshua, there seems to have been no doubt in their minds that Num.xxxv.1-8 and Jo.xxi.1-42 belonged to the priestly element, - whether it was regarded as the first or as the last of the major documents. Jo.xxi does indeed look like the other lists attributed to P, with its repeated formulae, the genealogical layout, and the numerical summing-up of each paragraph. Driver<sup>21</sup> lists a handful of terms characteristic of P, which appear in this passage: אֲבוֹת = households, v.1; אֶל-פִּי יְהוָה, as a variant of עַל-פִּי יְהוָה, 'according to the command of Yahweh', v.3; אֲחֻזָּה = 'possession', vv.12,39; מִחְצִית = 'half', v.25; and קִרְיַת אֲרֻבַּע as a name for Hebron, v.11. No doubt the peculiarity of the subject-matter prevents a longer list. To these we may add the interest in Aaron and Eleazar, and the

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21. S. R. Driver, An Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament, Edinburgh, 1891; 7th ed. 1898, pp.131ff. Cf. J. E. Carpenter and G. Harford, The Composition of the Hexateuch, London, 1902, pp.408ff.

division of Levi into three clans and a priestly group, which are not found in what Wellhausen would regard as pre-exilic literature. If then, for such reasons as these, it is agreed that Jo.xxi is from the priestly document, there is no cause to doubt that Num.xxxv.1-8 comes from the same source. It agrees closely in substance, without entering on a detailed enumeration of the cities; it exhibits the typical priestly precision of detail, measurement and number; and it follows a list of tribal leaders in typical priestly form<sup><22></sup>.

An element of doubt arises over Leviticus xxv.32-4. It falls within what is now recognised as the "Holiness Code," Lev.xvii-xxvi; and this 'code' is generally held to have been composed before P. The special character of the section was noticed by Graf<sup><23></sup>, and in 1877 Klostermann gave it the name now in general use<sup><24></sup>. In layout, though not in contents, it shows a certain resemblance to the Deuteronomic Code: extended, ordered paragraphs give way to an assortment of brief laws, and the whole is rounded off with a chapter of promises and threats. Unlike Deuteronomy, however, the collection has been incorporated into the priestly literature, and it appears that a good deal of P material has been introduced, especially in chapters xxiii-xxv. The verses with which we are concerned display none of the terminology characteristic of the 'Holiness'

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22. A. Weiser, Einleitung in das Alte Testament, 1948; 4th ed. 1957; E.T. London, 1961, p.146

23. K. H. Graf, Die Geschichtlichen Bücher des Alten Testaments, Leipzig, 1866, pp.75-83

24. A. Klostermann, 'Hat Ezechiel die in Lev.xviii-xxvi am deutlichsten erkennbare Gesetzessammlung verfasst?', 1877, reprinted in Der Pentateuch, Leipzig, 1895

material, as listed by Driver<25>; he notes that in this chapter "the marks of H . . . are least prominent in verses 29-34," and quotes Haupt as attributing them to P<26>. Carpenter and Harford follow suit, assigning them to the latest of the strata of P which they distinguish<27>,- the same source as the last chapters of Numbers<28>. We may therefore take it as agreed among the leading exponents of the literary critical method that Lev.xxv.32-4 are cut from the same cloth as Num.xxxv.1-8 and Jo.xxi.

(c) Evaluation of the Levite city list

As long as this priestly material was held to be the earliest of the main Pentateuchal sources, it was naturally regarded as lying closest to the events of the Exodus and Conquest; it might thus incorporate official records of such matters as the tribal territories and Levite cities<29>. While accepting the tradition as historical, however, Ewald points out that these cities could only be of ephemeral importance. The tribe of Dan, for instance, would not long be able to defend its four Levite cities in the west, and in David's time Gezer was held by Canaanites. "The entire system fell into confusion, as is clear not only from its never being mentioned

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25. Op.cit., pp.49f.

26. Op.cit., p.57. Cf. R. H. Pfeiffer, Introduction to the Old Testament, London, 1941, 2nd ed. 1952, p.240

27. Op.cit., p.489. Cf. p.272: "In xxiii-xxv it becomes plain that the earlier materials of Ph (the 'Holiness' source) have been wrought into the more rigid and elaborate forms of Pg (the P 'Grundschrift') and Ps (secondary extensions of P), with large loss in the process."

28. Op.cit., p.496

29. Cf. E.g. Bleek, op.cit., p.359

in later times as still existing, but still more from the fact that at a later period quite different places appear as Levitical cities, in which the Levites, driven from their first abodes, had taken refuge<sup>30</sup>. Dillmann, similarly, concedes that it was never put into effect in the form set out in Jo.xxi; although he argues against Graf<sup>31</sup> and Wellhausen that the scheme was a sensible and practical one, making the ministers of the law of God accessible to the inhabitants of the whole land, while avoiding too radical a fragmentation of the families of Levi. He points out that the historical evidence is decisive; in addition to the points made by Ewald, he remarks that in the time of the Judges the Levites appear to have been scattered in ones and twos throughout the land<sup>32</sup>, and that the concentration of Aaronites not around Shiloh but near Jerusalem argues a date after David had made that city the hub of the nation. (No longer, it appears, were scholars prepared to credit such an anticipation of later history to the foresight of Providence!) At most, he is willing to allow that the scheme may have been put into effect to some extent in the time of the united monarchy; it could not operate in the divided kingdoms, nor was the territory concerned in Israelite hands after the exile. Nevertheless, he would not have us suppose that the plan is merely the invention of a late author; it must be based on an early concept, or it could not have

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30. Op.cit., II p.82. He has in mind Nob (1 Sam.xxii.19) and perhaps Shiloh.

31. In Merx, Archiv für wissenschaftliche Erforschung des Alten Testaments, Halle, 1869-71, I pp.82ff.

32. Jdg.xvii.11; cf. Gen.xlix.7.

held its own against the facts of history and the different picture presented in the prophecies of Ezekiel<33>.

If those who believed in the early date of the priestly source had so little confidence in the historical existence of the Levite cities, how much stronger must be the doubts of those who assigned P to the exile or after! A Levitic author at the height of the united monarchy, as Ewald conceived the writer of his "Book of Origins", might well show interest in such a scheme from the fairly recent past, even if it had never been fully effective. But is it possible to imagine any writer, after the upheaval of the exile, preserving authentic details of an institution said to have had a brief life nearly a millennium before, - an institution of which no mention is made in any earlier literature known to us? "It would hardly have occurred to an author living in the monarchical period, when the continuity of the older history was still unbroken, to look so completely away from all the conditions of the then existing reality; had he done so, he would have produced upon his contemporaries the impression merely that he had scarcely all his wits about him. But after the exile had annihilated the ancient Israel, and violently and completely broken the old connection with the ancient conditions, there was nothing to hinder from planting and partitioning the tabula rasa in thought at pleasure, just as geographers are wont to do with

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33. Dillmann, op.cit., pp.214ff., referring to Ez.xlviii.9ff. He holds an intermediate position between Ewald and Wellhausen, in that he believed the priestly writing to have come after JE but before D.

their map as long as the countries are unknown." Thus Wellhausen<sup><34></sup>; and he has been widely followed. Cooke<sup><35></sup> notes that even within P it is asserted that the Levites have no possession, and agrees with Wellhausen in assuming that the idea was a utopian construction derived in essence from Ezekiel. Even Möhlenbrink, in his painstaking review of the Old Testament references to Levites, from a standpoint far removed from Wellhausen's, feels himself able to dismiss this tradition in a few words. "Die Verteilung der einzelnen Orte in den Städtelisten ist jedenfalls blosse Theorie: freilich ist sie als solche gerade wieder Niederschlag lebendigsten Lebens und heftiger Kämpfe innerhalb der levitischen Priesterschaften"<sup><36></sup>. More recently still, R. H. Pfeiffer has stated the position of the Wellhausen school in perhaps an extreme form: "In the third century, a Levite who was a kindred spirit of the Chronicler protested against the ancient practice (officially sanctioned by P in Num.xviii.20f.,24) depriving priests and Levites of territorial possessions. He assigned on paper thirteen cities to the priests and thirty-five to the Levites (all in the vicinity of Jerusalem)<sup><37></sup>, listing them as a fitting supplement to P's provision for asylum cities in Jo.xx<sup><38></sup>.

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34. Prolegomena, p.161

35. G. A. Cooke, Joshua, Cambridge, 1918, p.193

36. K. Möhlenbrink, 'Die Levitischen Überlieferungen des Alten Testaments', ZAW 52, 1934, p.212

37. Very few of the cities were near Jerusalem. Perhaps at some stage Pfeiffer had misinterpreted a note to the effect that the priests' cities were nearer Jerusalem than those of the other Levites.

38. Op.cit., pp.308f. See also G. Fohrer, E. Sellin,

(d) The basis of the list: Wellhausen's explanation

Wellhausen's view, then, that the Levite cities could only be regarded as the idealistic pipe dream of a post-exilic thinker, has won wide support. "The success of the concept of 'utopia', forged by Wellhausen, can be seen from its presence in the works of an author who has criticised the documentary hypothesis as violently as Y. Kaufmann; except that the latter dates the 'utopian' construction earlier, at the period of the conquest<sup>39</sup>. But the position contains a serious weakness. Wellhausen's arguments prove too much. If the provisions of Jo.xxi are altogether remote from reality; if there never were, and could not possibly have been, such things as Levite cities; how did the chapter ever come to be written? Pfeiffer, as we have just seen, regards it as a piece of polemic against the traditional landless status of the Levite caste. But, even if we grant that the possession of an ancestral 'inheritance' may have been a live issue in the post-exilic period, the terms in which this claim is couched are more guarded than one would expect of polemic. Indeed, the distinction between 'fields' (הַדָּש) and 'grazing land' (שִׁטְחַת)<sup>40</sup> seems designed to avoid any close analogy between the priestly cities and a tribal territory. Wellhausen himself regarded the passage as the fruit of a marriage of necessity between the idealism of Ez.xlv-

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Introduction to the Old Testament, E.T. London, 1970, p.204

39. J. A. Soggin, Le Livre de Josue, Neuchatel, 1970; E.T. Joshua, London, 1972, p.203

40. The distinction is explicit in Jo.xxi.11f., and is generally assumed to apply throughout the chapter. But see below, pp.144f.

xlvi and geographical reality<sup><41></sup>. He found the origins of the idea of a 'clerical tribe' in Deuteronomy; by the time Jo.xxi was composed, that idea had taken such firm root "that even the last and differentiating distinction (was) abolished which separated the actual tribes from the Levites, viz. communal independence and the degree of concentration which expressed itself in separate settlements"<sup><42></sup>. He maintained that, if the scheme had ever taken effect, the 48 cities would have amounted to a territorial possession, and would have given Levi a status comparable with the other tribes. The priestly statements in Num.xviii.20,23, that Levi was not to have an inheritance like the others, he regarded as "a form of speech taken over from Deuteronomy"<sup><43></sup> and, at the same time, a tacit recognition that no allocation of cities had ever actually been made to the Levites.

Not only did Wellhausen find the germ of the idea of a 'clerical tribe' in Deuteronomy; he also saw there the model for their unique territorial holding. This lay in the 'cities of refuge'. Originally, he plausibly suggests, any altar gave asylum. When Deuteronomy abolished the provincial altars, provision had to be made to avoid miscarriages of justice in cases of accidental homicide a long way from Jerusalem<sup><44></sup>. The Priestly Code accepted the idea of asylum cities, and named three on each side of the Jordan<sup><45></sup>. Of these six cities,

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41. Prolegomena, pp.159-164

42. Op.cit., p.161

43. Ibid.

44. Dt.xix.1-13. Wellhausen rightly regarded Dt.iv.41-43 as from a later hand.

45. Num.xxxv.10ff.; Jo.xx



four at least had been famous cult centres<sup><46></sup>; that is, in his view, they were priestly and Levitical cities. No doubt they would all share this character.

The final impetus was given to the development of the concept of the Levites' 'inheritance', Wellhausen suggests, by the later chapters of Ezekiel and their picture of the future Israel. This was a purely theoretical construction, with no relation to the geographical features of the country. Its interest here is that it provides for an area of land near the central sanctuary "for the Levites who minister at the temple, as their possession<sup><47></sup> for cities to dwell in"<sup><48></sup>. (The tribes' 'surrender' of land to the clergy is not as explicit as Wellhausen implies<sup><49></sup>, since there is no suggestion in this context that anyone other than the Levites had a claim on this territory.) The reference to the 'cities' here is no doubt simply a graphic way of saying that the Levites are to live in their land; cities are appropriate in scale for a tribe, as 'houses' were for the families of priests in the previous verse. But, as Wellhausen saw it, they caught the imagination of the priestly writer, and took on a new significance.

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46. Wellhausen accepted the equation Ramoth = Ramoth-mizpeh = Mizpah (cf. Jo.xiii.26), and referred to Gen.xxxi and Jo.xi.11

47. נַחֲלָה (possession) is one of the terms used in P for the land owned by a person (e.g. Gen.xxiii.4,9,20; Lev.xxv) or nation (Gen.xvii.8; xxxvi 43, etc.) or group of tribes (Num.xxxii.5,22 etc.). It is not the term normally used in Joshua for the individual tribal territories; it does, however occur in Jo.xxi.12 and 41, of Caleb's 'possession' at Hebron and of Israel's territory as a whole.

48. Ez.xlv.5, following LXX: πόλεις τοῦ κατοικεῖν for MT:

לְשִׁכְתֵּי יִשְׂרָאֵל.

49. Op.cit., p.163

Ezekiel's prophetic programme, placing the Temple in the centre of the priesthood and the priests in the middle of Israel, could not be retrojected into early times as it stood. That would have made nonsense of the historical traditions in the Law and the Prophets, not to mention any associations of tribal groups with towns and districts which were still current or remembered. It would therefore be necessary to compromise. What 'cities' could the Levites have, if there was in fact no central block of land for them to live in? They could already be regarded as possessing the asylum cities; what more natural than to make up their number to a suitable figure from other towns known or supposed to have contained shrines in the past, or to have had some other such connection with Levi? These cities would lie within the tribal territories, so some form of transfer would be required (for which Wellhausen found a precedent implicit in Ezekiel); and, as a feature of the divinely established order in the Promised Land, the allocation had to be made by Joshua in accordance with an instruction from the lips of Moses. Which is what we find in P. But whereas, as Wellhausen remarks, it is clear enough what Ezekiel intended to convey by his scheme, the concessions made by the priestly writer to historical verisimilitude have masked and "almost paralysed" <sup>50</sup> his motives.

Wellhausen's reconstruction of the growth of the idea of 'Levite cities' is ingenious; but, having once accused him of proving too much, we must now ask whether he has this time

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50. Ibid.

succeeded in proving enough. Three points call for comment. Firstly, on his own showing, it is not at all clear why the fiction of Levite cities should have been devised. Was it polemic in favour of the Levites? Polemic is rarely so shy of making its object known. Was it recognition of the tribal status the Levites had in fact achieved by now? Then how did the nominal possession of cities, mostly if not entirely outside the current boundaries of Israel, add to the clear and accepted tradition that Levi was one of the sons of Jacob? The only further step of any significance would be the allocation of a tribal territory alongside the others in Jo.xiiiiff.- an innovation no more far-fetched, on Wellhausen's terms, than that with which we are faced. Or was it the intention to show how different Levi was from the rest of the tribes? But hitherto there had been a sharp distinction; Levi alone had no inheritance - Yahweh was their inheritance. Now its edge was blunted; Levi had some sort of tribal possession after all. In fact, we can find no case that is advanced by the introduction of a list of unhistorical Levite cities.

Secondly, can it really be regarded as probable that a writer should sit down and pick a group of 'Levite cities' out of "the general recollection that there were once in Israel many holy places and residences of priesthoods"<51>? It is one thing to modify an existing tradition for doctrinal reasons; such developments can be clearly enough documented from the Old Testament literature<52>. But it is quite another for

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51. Op.cit., p.162

52. See for instance the differences between 2 Sam.xxiv and

an author to fabricate a pseudo-historical institution e nihilo; this can rarely, if ever, be safely attested. Wellhausen and his followers<sup><53></sup> make what play they can with the 'factual basis' of the scheme - the memory that there had been shrines served by Levites in various towns. But Jo.xxi is far from being a list of towns where the cult had been practised. To the contrary, for a priestly author the only true Levitic altar was in Jerusalem, which is omitted from the list. Indeed, it is only a limited group within the tribe whom he will allow to share in the ministry of the altar at all. Nor is it clear from the earlier histories that those who had tended the provincial shrines were regularly Levites. This appears to have been Ezekiel's view<sup><54></sup>, however, and it may well have been the current belief in the years after the exile. Even so, there is very little in common between the existence of shrines with resident priests, and the formal allocation of shrineless cities to Levites for residential purposes only.

Thirdly, both the previous objections are reinforced when we look at the geographical distribution of the cities listed in Jo.xxi, and at the character of such of them as are known elsewhere. To the geography we shall return later. Of the cities found in other contexts, Jerusalem is remarkable for its absence from the list, since it was the priestly city par excellence. Commentators have explained that it could scarcely feature in a list attributed to Joshua, because it did not

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1 Chr.xxi.

53. E.g. Cooke, op.cit., p.193

54. xliv.15; cf. also Chronicles, passim.

come into Israelite hands until long after his death. This may be the correct reason; although elsewhere Joshua did not hesitate to name towns within the ideal Israel but not yet captured<sup>55</sup>. However, there might be other objections also to naming the city which had a special relation to David and to God Himself, alongside the other Levitic seats. It is less easy to explain the absence of Nob, one of the few towns clearly stated to have been a priestly residence as well as a sanctuary in Saul and David's time<sup>56</sup>. This may have been ancient history in the age of P, but he could not have been ignorant of the tradition. Further, we may ask ourselves what could possibly be meant by saying that such cities as Hebron and Shechem were allocated to the Levites. These were important provincial centres, which played their part in the history of Israel, but even the most discerning eye would be hard pressed to find a prominent role taken by the Levite inhabitants.

Wellhausen's explanation of how Jo.xxi came to be written, then, does not carry conviction. However, as we have seen, all those who pursue literary analysis agree that the chapter, in its present form, belongs to the latest stratum of the Hexateuch; and most would grant, further, that the concept was post-exilic, remote if not altogether detached from any historical reality. In later chapters we shall examine the different views that have been proposed since the form-critical

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55. E.g. Gezer, Aijalon, Taanach, Rehob, Nahalol (Jdg.i.27ff.)

56. 1 Sam.xxii.19

and traditio-historical methods of research began to make their impact.

## 2. The material in Chronicles

When we turn to Chronicles, and to the study that has been devoted to 1 Chr.vi in particular, the story can be told more briefly. Curtis observes that "the Books of Chronicles, from their supplementary and, through their genealogical material, their unedifying character, have never been a favourite field of study and investigation, hence their literature has always been relatively meagre"<sup>57</sup>. (He nevertheless produces five and a half closely printed pages of bibliography). The differences between Chronicles and the Deuteronomic History<sup>58</sup>, and the apparent inconsistencies within the genealogical material of Chronicles<sup>59</sup>, caused difficulties for early Jewish and Christian scholars. These books were all accepted as sacred scripture; those therefore who regarded the scriptures as infallible had perforce to explain away the apparent discrepancies. Spinoza derided the inadequacy of such explanations, and could not think how Chronicles had been valued more highly than the books which had been classed as 'apocryphal'<sup>60</sup>. From his time until the close of the

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57. E. L. Curtis and A. A. Madsen, The Books of Chronicles, Edinburgh, 1910, p.44

58. E.g. 1 Chr.xxi.1,25, cf. 2 Sam.xxiv.1,24; 2 Chr.viii.2 cf. 1 Ki.xi.11; 2 Chr.xxiii.1-3 cf. 2 Ki.xi.4; cf. Pfeiffer, op.cit., p.802

59. E.g. Obed-edom, 1.xiii.13; xv.18,24; xxvi.4-8, 15; xv.21; xvi.38; Jeduthun, 1 Chr.xvi.38; (cf. Ps.lxii.1; lxxvii.1); 1 Chr.xv.17,19; xvi.41; xxv.1-6, etc. Etham, 1.ii.4,6; vi.27(42), 29(44); cf. 1 Ki.v.11(iv.31). Cf. Wellhausen, Prolegomena, E.T. pp.219f.

60. Tractatus Theologico-Politicus, Hamburg, 1670, chs. 9 and 10.

nineteenth century the battle raged between conservative and more liberal scholars over the question of the reliability of the Chronicler, and his use or abuse of his sources. Were the differences due to additional authentic material at his disposal, or to his adaptation and free invention woven around the stories to be found in a more original form in Samuel and Kings?

Eichhorn regarded him as in the main using faithfully the traditional material at his disposal<sup>61</sup>. This included genealogies preserved in the Temple, which had been to varying degrees abbreviated and corrupted over the years. There were also the various historical documents to which he refers<sup>62</sup>, together with an old life of David and Solomon, which had also been the basis of the Deuteronomic history of their reigns. These had all suffered alteration and corruption in the course of transmission; and the Chronicler himself had probably made some innovations, such as the mention of Satan<sup>63</sup>, and the kindling of sacrifices by fire from heaven<sup>64</sup>.

This somewhat curious notion, that the reliability of the book could be vindicated by showing that its author had faithfully followed his sources, divergent though these might be from other texts of Scripture, was taken up by a number of apologists, and presented in its fullest form by Keil<sup>65</sup>.

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61. Eichhorn, op.cit.

62. See the list of references in Driver, Introduction, pp.527f.

63. 1 Chr.xxi.1

64. 1 Chr.xxi.26; 2 Chr.vii.1

65. C. F. Keil, Apologetischer Versuch über die Bücher der

In outline, he argued that the author of Samuel and Kings and the Chronicler had each picked the passages which suited their purposes from a larger corpus of source-material. For instance, both transmit the same account of the death of Saul<sup>66</sup>, to the point where the Philistines come to strip the slain. In the one story, they cut off his head, take off his armour, and hang his body on the wall of Beth-shan. In the other, they fasten his head in the temple of Dagan, and nothing is said of what they do with his body. Yet the sequel is the same: the men of Jabesh-gilead take away Saul's body (but not his head), and bury it. Keil suggests that the original source gave the Philistines' treatment of both Saul's head and his body.

Within the bounds of such passages as this, Keil's explanation of the particular divergences is not implausible. At the very least, it is no more difficult to see why the two compilers should have picked on different parts of the king's body, both head and trunk being mentioned in their exemplar, than to explain why the Chronicler, having the book of Samuel as his sole authority here, should choose to diverge from it in this detail. However, De Wette had already shown that to examine each discrepancy in isolation was not enough. A general survey of the wood made such a view of the particular trees within it untenable<sup>67</sup>. All the material in Chronicles

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Chronik und über die Integrität des Buches Ezra, Berlin, 1833; Die Bücher der Chronik, Leipzig, 1870, E.T. Edinburgh, 1872

66. 1 Sam. xxxi; 1 Chr. x

67. W. M. L. de Wette, Beiträge zur Einleitung in das Alte



which was not common to Samuel and Kings exhibited a consistent literary style and a coherent historical and theological outlook. It was not reasonable to suppose that the compiler would adhere slavishly to the terms of one source, while digesting others to his own pattern of thought and diction. The only proper conclusion was that he had followed no other 'source' than Samuel-Kings. The rest of the 'history' could be shown to arise naturally out of the circumstances of his time, his historical and theological presuppositions, and the aims he wished to pursue.

This position was elaborated by Graf<sup>68</sup>, and brilliantly expounded by Wellhausen<sup>69</sup>. The latter felt it needed no argument that Chronicles was composed "fully three hundred years" after the exilic period in which the books of Samuel and Kings were compiled; his thesis is that "the mere difference of date fully accounts for the varying ways in which the two histories represent the same facts and events, and the difference of spirit arises from the influence of the Priestly Code, which came into existence in the interval"<sup>70</sup>. First he runs through the historical narratives, showing how all the divergences from the Deuteronomic history could be attributed to the Chronicler's own beliefs about the way God deals with the world, and to the lessons he intended to convey. Then he

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Testament, vol. I: Kritischer Versuch über die Glaubens-  
würdigkeit der Bücher der Chronik, Halle, 1806

68. K. H. Graf, Geschichtlichen Bücher des Alten Testaments,  
part II: Das Buch der Chronik als Geschichtsquelle, Leipzig,  
1866, pp.114ff.

69. Prolegomena, ch.6

70. Prolegomena, pp.171f.

turns to consider "the genealogical lists prefixed by way of introduction in 1 Chron.i-ix", and finds that "they also are in the main valid only for the period at which they were drawn up - whether for its actual condition or for its conceptions of the past<sup>71</sup>". The interest in genealogies, and their use to cover large periods of history economically, he finds characteristic of Judaism. Only in the material relating to Hezron, Jerahmeel and Caleb is he prepared to recognise a pre-exilic kernel, which has been much expanded by later and worthless accretions<sup>72</sup>. In general, however, "to speak of a tradition handed down from pre-exilic times as being found in Chronicles, either in 1 Chron.i-ix or in 1 Chron.x-2 Chron.xxxvi, is . . . manifestly out of the question<sup>73</sup>".

In this view Wellhausen has been widely followed. The scholars of this school<sup>74</sup> grant that the sources referred to in Chronicles may really have existed, in the form of one or more historical or midrashic works; but such 'sources' would themselves be late and of little value. Pfeiffer observes that there is very little reason to believe that the Chronicler does in fact quote from the books he names. His known quotations from Samuel-Kings, the only passages exhibiting a style not his own, are unacknowledged<sup>75</sup>.

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71. Prolegomena, p.211

72. 1 Chr.ii.9-50a. See Prolegomena, pp.216ff.

73. Prolegomena, p.222

74. E.g. Driver, Introduction; Curtis and Madsen, op.cit.; Pfeiffer, op.cit.

75. Cf. also C. C. Torrey, 'The Chronicler as Editor and as Independent Narrator', AJSL 25, 1909, pp.157-173, 188-217; F. Michaeli, Les Livres des Chroniques, d'Esdras et de

Rothstein in his commentary took a somewhat unusual line, that Chronicles had passed through two or three separate stages of development<76>. The basic historical work was designed to continue the priestly writing, both extending the genealogical material to an age later than that of Moses, and in particular setting out the developments in the Jerusalem cultus attributed to David. This work was not, however, so readily and widely accepted as the priestly writing, and many of its divergences from P can be attributed to corruptions which arose while there were few copies in existence. However, after some time another writer took it as the basis for his new work, one of whose main aims was to show historical precedent and authority for developments current in his own time,- notably the functions and status of the subordinate Temple personnel. To this end he not only worked over the substance of the previously existing book, but added a good deal of other material. Thus the book reached practically its present form; there would no doubt be a number of minor glosses and corruptions introduced subsequently. In the section with which we are most concerned, 1 Chr.i-ix, Rothstein recognised that the second author used sources which might well be pre-exilic. These are to be recognised in one of the two strands of the genealogies of Jerahmeel and Caleb (ii and iv), Issachar and Benjamin (v.24, vii.1ff.), and one or two other places<77>. In ch.vi, he

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Néhémie, Neuchatel, 1967, pp.10f.

76. J. W. Rothstein and D. J. Hänel, Das Erste Buch der Chronik, Leipzig, 1927, pp.189ff.

77. Op.cit., pp.193ff.

suggests that the first author abbreviated the list of cities, naming only those allotted to the Aaronite priests; while the subsequent writer, with his strong concern for the other Levites, added vv.51ff.(66ff.)<sup><78></sup>. However, he does not for a moment suspect that this material might have been derived from any other source than P, as now represented by Jo.xxi<sup><79></sup>. Galling takes a similar line, as far as the dual authorship of Chronicles is concerned, and he is prepared to recognise that the second (Levite) author "had historical material of prime importance at his disposal"<sup>80</sup>. He would make this second hand responsible for introducing the whole of the section on the Levite cities; like Rothstein, he is in no doubt that it is totally derived from the priestly account which stands in the book of Joshua<sup><81></sup>.

Welch criticised Rothstein's conclusions, on the grounds that "there did not appear to be any common outlook which gave unity to the notes or parallel material which had been so liberally introduced into the text"<sup>82</sup>. He accepted, however, that the work appeared to have been much revised, especially in the sections which were not derived from D. The position

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78. Op.cit., p.127 (referring to Benzinger)

79. "Deutlich ist, dass vi.39-66 inhaltlich und auch fast durchgängig im wortlaut aus der quelle entnommen ist, zu der Jo.xxi gehört hat; d.i. aber der priesterlichen schrift (P)" (p.126).

80. K. Galling, Die Bücher der Chronik, Esra, Nehemia, Göttingen, 1954, pp.8ff., 30ff.

81. Von Rad, also, substantially accepts Rothstein's position: Das Geschichtsbild des Chronistischen Werkes, Stuttgart, 1930, p.133

82. A. C. Welch, The Work of the Chronicler, London, 1939, p.5

he reached was in the end not unlike Rothstein's. He envisaged a work of history, based on D and other sources, which had been extensively annotated and expanded at certain points, by a writer anxious to correct the impression given by the book about the status of the Temple, the ark, and the Davidic dynasty. Unlike Rothstein, von Rad and Galling, he would not extend this double authorship to the first nine chapters of Chronicles, which he seemed to regard as entirely the work of the annotator or a later hand. But he chiefly differed in dating the annotator to the period immediately after the return from exile, and consequently making the original author nearly contemporary with the Deuteronomic historian. This view has not commanded wide assent. It would appear to receive some support from von Rad's earlier tentative conclusion, that the use of quotations in the "Levitical sermons" in Chronicles indicates that the Pentateuch was not yet fully canonical<sup><83></sup>. Von Rad himself however regarded these 'sermons' as constituting a 'form' of late origin<sup><84></sup>.

Rudolph agrees that many additions have been made to the original draft of Chronicles, which he dates to the early decades of the fourth century<sup><85></sup>. But he condemns any attempt to attribute them to a single major recension; they are too diverse and contradictory<sup><86></sup>. Most of these additions he

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83. G. von Rad, 'Die levitische Predigt in den Büchern der Chronik', 1934; E.T. in The Problem of the Hexateuch, London, 1966, pp.267-280, esp. p.280.

84. P.277.

85. W. Rudolph, Chronikbücher, Tübingen, 1955, Einleitung p.X.

86. Pp.XI, XVIIIf. Cf. also I. Benzinger, Die Bücher der

finds in the first half of the book, and among them he counts the passage on the Levite cities. Like the majority of the genealogical material, he regards this as derived from earlier canonical writings - i.e. Jo.xxi - and has no more to say on its historical value. He is however prepared to concede that much of the narrative material not derived from Samuel-Kings is of value, and follows Klostermann<sup>87</sup> in supposing it to come from an expanded edition of our book of Kings, covering a longer period, which is no longer extant<sup>88</sup>.

Finally, in his recent commentary Michaeli joins Rudolph in his criticism of the attempt to distinguish two major strata in Chronicles. He inclines however to place the composition of the work somewhat later than Rudolph, and to allow for a wider range of sources, oral as well as written, in addition to the Deuteronomic history and the supposed 'Midrash on the book of Kings'. There would also no doubt be subsequent additions, particularly to the genealogies in 1.i-ix<sup>89</sup>. 1.vi.39ff.(54ff.) he derives without hesitation from Jo.xxi, mentioning the possibility that vv.50ff.(65ff.) might have been added subsequently.

In our next chapter we shall consider Jo.xxi and 1 Chr.vi in detail. Here we must give some account of a handful of other passages in the books of Chronicles which refer to Levite

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Chronik, Tübingen, 1901, p.10.

87. A. Klostermann, art. 'Chronik', in Herzog, Realenzyklopädie, 3rd ed. Leipzig, 1896-1913, vol.IV pp.85-98, esp. p.96.

88. Rudolph, op.cit., p.XI.

89. Michaeli, op.cit., pp.11f.

cities. They include 1 Chr.xiii.2; 2 Chr.xi.14; and possibly 1 Chr.ix.2; 2 Chr.xxxi.15,19.

The first of these speaks of summoning "the priests and Levites in the cities that have pasture lands," along with the rest of the people of Israel, to fetch the ark. It is clear enough that the author has 'Levite cities' in mind; the term migrash, 'pasture land', is scarcely used in any other connection<sup>90</sup>. However, it makes no great difference to the story whether the priests lived in specially allocated cities or not, and the detail could well have been added by a late narrator re-telling the tale. This is the more probable as there is no mention of priests and Levites, let alone their cities, in the shorter parallel passage 2 Sam.vi.1.

2 Chr.xi.14 also refers to the 'pasture lands', and also exceeds the evidence of its parallel in 1 Ki.xii.31. But here the resemblance to the previous example ends. "The Levites left their pasture lands and their possessions (real estate) and came to Judah and Jerusalem, because Jeroboam and his sons cast them out from serving as priests of the Lord, and he appointed his own priests for the high places, and for the satyrs, and for the calves which he had made." The calves, the high places, and the non-Levitic priests come from 1 Kings; is Jeroboam's positive expulsion of the Levites, and their trek to Jerusalem, an additional piece of historical tradition? It has been argued that what is here narrated is in itself

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90. See ch.III n.72

probable; the Levites would tend to be loyal to the old Israelite religious tradition, whose chief symbol, the Ark, was in Jerusalem, close to the son of David, the anointed of Yahweh<sup><91></sup>. But although Jeroboam's innovations may have upset some of them, it is now clear that these changes were within the framework of loyalty to Yahweh, and in such circumstances it is very doubtful if a Levitic priesthood would appear to be a religious or political threat to the new king. It may be, as we shall see later, that these 'Levites' were not so much priests as provincial administrators; if so, their return to Jerusalem at the change of regime is the more natural. But the Chronicler gives no hint of this; his Levites serve as priests. Possibly he is influenced by the provisions of Dt.xviii.6-8 and the events of Josiah's reformation, when (according to 2 Ki.xxiii.9) priests did come to Jerusalem from the provinces. However that may be, it is at least plausible that in 2 Chr.xi.13ff. we have no more than an expansion of the account in 1 Kings, illuminated by the author's acquaintance with the list of Levite cities, his distaste for the northern kingdom, and his admiration for the Levite office as he knew it in his own day<sup><92></sup>.

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91. Cf. J. Maier, 'Zur Geschichte des Bundesgedankens und zur Rolle der Leviten in der politischen und religiösen Geschichte des alten Israel', *Judaica* 25, 1969, pp.222-228

92. So Michaeli, p.173, and Rudolph, pp.230f., who emphasizes the transparent religious motivation of the account of the Levites leaving the wicked régime in loyalty to Yahweh. Commentators have long pointed out that the limited period of three years in which they "made Rehoboam secure" by their righteousness was dictated by the disastrous invasion of Shishak in Rehoboam's fifth year. The Chronicler could explain this only as retribution for national apostasy in the previous year.



1 Chr.ix.2 is an obscure verse; it refers to cities not only of priests and Levites, but also of "Israel," and does not use the technical term 'pasture lands'. It is therefore of doubtful relevance to our study. 2 Chr.xxxi.15,19 are of more interest. They come in the course of the long description of Hezekiah's reform, of which only a brief summary account is given at the beginning of 2 Ki.xviii. We read that Kore, a Levite, was in charge of the 'freewill offerings to God'-the offerings, it would appear, for the maintenance of the ministry. Six assistants helped him "in the cities of the priests<93>, to distribute the portions" to all male Levites "except those enrolled by genealogy." Other officers made the distribution "for the sons of Aaron, the priests, who were in the fields of common land belonging to their cities, . . . and to every one among the Levites who was enrolled."

Hezekiah's reform may well have included an overhaul of the priestly structure; but it is difficult to see it happening quite as the Chronicler indicates. The priesthood was not reserved to descendants of Aaron until after the exile<94>,

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93. For בְּכַרְיָם LXX reads διὰ χειρὸς = דִּלְיָ, 'by the hand' of the priests, which Benzinger takes to be original. Rudolph (p.306) objects that some at least of the persons here named are priests; and, we may add, the phrase occurs also at the beginning of the same verse, whence it might have been repeated in error by a copyist. We must keep the reading of the MT.
94. In addition to such examples as Samuel the Ephraimite (1 Sam.ii) and the sons of David (2 Sam.viii.18), cf. Dt. xviii.6-8 and 1 Ki.xii.31, which imply that the priesthood was not limited to the Aaronite clan within Levi when these passages were written.

nor until that period was the administration of Temple funds put in the hands of Levites. According to the Deuteronomic historian, in the reign of Jehoash<sup>95</sup> and again under Josiah<sup>96</sup> such affairs were handled by the king, the 'secretary', and the chief priest. And finally, the 'enrolment' of Levites over 20 years old seems to reflect a combination of two P traditions, (i) that the Levites were numbered for work in the tent of meeting from the age of 30 (Num.iv.34ff.) or 25 (Num.vii.24), and (ii) that males in the other tribes were numbered from the age of 20 (Num.i). It would appear, therefore, that once again the Chronicler is remoulding history in conformity with his own interests and the conditions of his own time<sup>97</sup>; and that his mention of Levite cities has once again no value as historical evidence. However, one is left with the question whence he derived the lists of names in the passage. Surely he would not conjure them out of thin air. One can only surmise that he may have been using some sketchy archival data, and writing up the story as best he could.

These four passages, then, offer no solid evidence that the Chronicler found mention of Levite cities in reliable historical sources. This is in line with the generally accepted view, that his knowledge of the institution is derived from the Pentateuch and Joshua.

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95. 2 Ki.xii.4ff.

96. 2 Ki.xxii.3ff.

97. Cf. Wellhausen, *Prolegomena*, p.192: "All is described in the accustomed style, in the course of three long chapters, which tell us nothing indeed about the time of Hezekiah, but are full of information for the period in which the writer lived!"

### 3. The age of the sources

In conclusion, let us consider how early in Israel's history we can place the concept of Levite cities, on the type of evidence so far discussed. There may well be a document underlying, and therefore earlier than, the lists in Jo,xxi and 1 Chr.vi. However, these two passages are both in the latest strata of their books, so the original need be no earlier than P. Indeed, on Pfeiffer's view, it could date from the age of the original Chronicler! But few would wish to see the book of Joshua still being formed at so late a date.

Nor is there anything in the language of the lists to help us estimate their age. The one technical term, 'pasture-lands', is scarcely found in any other context. We can only remark that the tribe of Levi is not divided into the clans of Kohath, Gershon and Merari in pre-exilic literature.

The relation of the lists to the other relevant texts is also of little help. We have seen that the few passing references to Levite cities in Chronicles probably come from the author and his knowledge of the institution. Even if he was not himself responsible for incorporating the list in the preface to his work, he would know of the cities from the Priestly writings. Lev,xxv.32-4, Num,xxxv.1-8 and Jo,xxi are all attributed to P. Of these, the passage in Numbers has a logical priority, as it gives the divine instruction for what is to be done. Most of the critics accordingly regard the

list as arising out of Num.xxxv. However, elsewhere in P we see instruction and execution side by side; so here, although the language is not on this occasion repeated word for word, yet the basic presentation hangs together, and requires no interval of years between the writing of Moses' command and the listing of the allotted cities. Noth, indeed, would reverse the order, making the Numbers passage dependent on Joshua; as he sees it, the cities of refuge were first incorporated into the Levite city list in Joshua, and the Numbers verses were then extracted from the compound, refuge cities (v.6) and all. But again, this process need take no long time; one hand could achieve it all.

Lev.xxv.32ff. is perhaps a little different. Here we have a supplement to the basic provisions concerning Levite cities, to deal with a special and perhaps somewhat remote situation: the jubilee year. Again, we have to do with an addition to the original priestly legislation to which it is attached. There is little evidence that the jubilee regulations were ever effective. Indeed, it is almost the strongest extant corroboration of the real existence of either of these shadowy institutions, that it was found necessary to issue a statement of their relationship! One would not expect the need for such a statement to arise until some time after the institutions, jubilee year and Levite cities, had been established. This would advance the concept, if not also the existence, of these cities to some time before the writing of these verses, which, as we have seen, are again assigned to

P. However, it is equally possible that they represent simply the observation of an acute legal mind, seeing the implications of statutes on paper before a case arises,- and indeed, perhaps before the statutes had come into effect.

So we may conclude that literary analysis furnishes no evidence for the emergence of the concept of Levite cities much before the time of the Priestly writer, most of a millennium after their alleged establishment. Most critics therefore follow Wellhausen in doubting if they ever really existed.

In this chapter we turn to a closer examination of the questions raised by the literary study of the lists of Levite cities. The texts of Jo and Ch contain substantially the same material, but in a somewhat different order. Jo starts with a summary paragraph, inserts a note on Hebron, and then proceeds to list the towns allotted to the four groups of Levites: the Aaronites, Kohathites, Gershonites and Merarites. Ch places the summary not at the beginning, but between the Aaronite and Kohathite allocations. This would seem a less natural order; and there are signs of dislocation of the text, particularly at the end of Ch's version of the summary. We shall therefore follow the order in Joshua.

Jo.1-3 provides a historical introduction to the chapter, setting the scene at the end of the allocation of territory after the conquest. We shall have occasion to treat these verses in the next chapter. Ch, on the other hand, comes in the Levite section of a loosely articulated catena of genealogical material. A narrative introduction, as in Jo, would be out of place. Instead, v.39 opens with a clause to which there is no parallel in Joshua: "These are their dwellings and

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1. In this chapter, "Ch" is used alone to indicate 1 Chr.vi.39-66 (Eng. 54-81), and "Jo" for Jo.xxi.1-2. Verse numbers without further reference normally relate to one of these passages.

encampments<2> in their territory". It does not form an altogether appropriate introduction to a list of major towns allotted to the Levites from the territory of the twelve tribes of Israel. טירה, 'encampment', is a rare and somewhat far-fetched term for established cities; BDB relates it especially to the "circular encampment of nomad tribes"<3>. And בגבולם, "within their borders", conflicts both with the scattered character of the list, and with the repeated statements that Levi was to have no portion, no territory, alongside the other tribes. It is the more remarkable that the term should appear again in v.51; that it should be attested by the LXX in the corresponding place in Jo.20, where the MT has the visually similar word גורלם; and that the same two readings should recur in the LXX and MT of Jo.40, which has no parallel in Chronicles<4>. It would appear at first sight that the MT of Joshua, published before Chronicles, should preserve the older and more appropriate reading. But it is then difficult to explain why it should have been altered, in so many places, to a word so conspicuously at variance with the facts as they were then understood. If however we can suppose that this text in Chronicles goes back to a time before it had been so clearly laid down that no Levites ever had territory in Israel, then we can well see why a late reader of Joshua, after the Greek version had been made, might feel compelled to alter the

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2. Literally, "their dwellings for their encampments". One of the terms is surely redundant.
  3. It occurs nowhere else in Chronicles. See ch.VI, pp.283f.
  4. גורל is not used elsewhere in Jo of the cities allotted. It is used several times, in Ch as well as Jo, of the 'lot' as a method of distribution: Jo.4,5,6,8,10: Ch.39,46,48,50.

word into one more compatible with such passages as Jo.xiii.14,33.

In the course of the present chapter we shall see further evidence in Jo of an interest in clarity and harmony; and we shall also find reason to believe that Chronicles preserves an earlier form of the list of Levite cities than that in Joshua.

1. The summary of the allocations (Jo.4-8; Ch.46-48)

In Jo, the summary consists essentially of four sentences, one for each section of the tribe of Levi, giving the number of the cities allocated, and the names of the tribes from which they were drawn. Each sentence follows the same pattern, with two small and possibly accidental exceptions. Vv.5 and 6 speak, rather curiously, of the Kohathites and Gershonites receiving their cities "by lot from the families of the tribe of (x), from the tribe of (y)" etc. V.7 reads more naturally: "The Merarites according to their families received from the tribe of . . ." It would be easy to emend the two preceding verses to the same form, as BH(3) suggests<5>. For v.6, the emendation would be supported by the parallel in Ch.47; the text of Ch.46 is confused, and there is no parallel to Jo.4. The LXX of Ch.47f. follows the MT word for word, and the LXX of Jo.4ff. seems to be an equally literal version. It is the more remarkable that it makes no mention of these 'families' except in v.7. In this silence it is supported by the Syriac and Vulgate. It may be that the translators regarded the

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5. למשפחתם מטה for ממשפחת מטה.



term as redundant<sup>6</sup>; it makes no apparent contribution to the sense, and is in any case absent from v.4. Perhaps the author was less consistent than a form-critic would wish. The other irregularity in this summary passage is the omission of the expression 'by lot' from v.7. This is however supplied by LXX.

This section, then, does not present any great internal problems. However, it does not sit comfortably in its present context. Jo.3 sets out to introduce 'these cities' (RSV: "the following cities"), but the list of towns does not begin for another ten verses. Instead, we are offered a note of the number of places allocated to each Levite clan from the various tribes. The first sentence of v.4 provides a very unsatisfactory transition<sup>7</sup>. When we have just read, "The people of Israel gave to the Levites the following cities," we do not expect a bald reference to the workings of the lot. Nor does it follow, when "the lot came out for the families of the Kohathites" (v.4a), that the Aaronites should receive the first group of cities. One can only surmise that this isolated sentence was at one stage the introduction to the city list, perhaps before the Aaronites were so clearly distinguished from the rest of the Kohathites. And at the end of the summary section, v.8 brings us back to the point we had reached in v.3, which it repeats almost verbatim. Noth regards this as confirming that the summary section has

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6. But see S. Holmes, Joshua, p.72 and p.5.

7. If it were part of the summary-formula, it would presumably be repeated in vv.5-7.

been intruded into its present context; not only does it interrupt the original run of the sense, but we have to be brought back to the exact point at which the digression began in order to re-join the narrative<8>. The position of v.8 is however ambiguous. As a repetition of v.3, bringing us back to the main thread of the narrative, it again promises a list of towns still to come. But it also serves to round off the preceding summary section. Indeed, its parallel in Ch seems at one stage to have concluded the whole treatment there of the Levite cities. The expression "these cities" will then refer back to those enumerated in the preceding verses. This sense of conclusion is strengthened by the last clause, "as Yahweh had commanded through Moses," which is fuller and more final than the corresponding expression in v.3; and by the fact that the following verse is of an introductory character.

In Chronicles, the section follows the list of towns allocated to the Aaronites. As the number of cities has just been given (v.45c), they are omitted from the summary. It seems to follow that at one stage the compiler intended to use the summary not as a preface or addition, but as a substitute for the rest of the list. Aaron's cities he had given in full; in the rest he was less interested, and the mere numbers would suffice<9>.

Ch.46 takes up the tale, then, from the beginning of Jo.5.

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8. See below, p.193.

9. Cf. Rothstein's and Rudolph's commentaries, ad loc.

All goes well for the first few words: "And (they allocated) to the rest of the descendants of Kohath!" but here the texts diverge. Jo has "from the families of the tribe of Ephraim and from the tribe of Dan and from the half tribe of Manasseh;" Ch gives, literally, "from the family of the tribe, from the half of the tribe of the half of Manasseh." The LXX suggests that ממשפחת should be pointed as a plural, and the following word read with the preposition מן<10>; otherwise its translators were apparently confronted with the text we have<11>. Clearly the MT is damaged, probably past demonstrable repair. BH(3), followed by Rothstein and Rudolph, instructs us to read למשפחותם  
סמטה אפרים וממטה דן וממחצית מטה מנשה,  
on the strength of the text of Jo. The first word is found in this form in the two following verses, to which it should probably be assimilated. It is also agreed that the second "half" must be struck out. This is a crude deletion, with no manuscript support but the Vulgate. Earlier commentators, including Rothstein, demand the erasure without any indication how the text might have reached its present form. Rudolph suggests a marginal gloss on מחצית, incorporated into the text in error, but intended to indicate the term used in the corresponding place in Jo. This seems the least implausible explanation of a most eccentric expression. I wonder if the last word of the previous verse<12>, which certainly does not

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10. The Syriac supports the latter correction; the Greek, Syriac and Latin versions are quoted in favour of a corresponding change in Jo.5.
  11. 'Half' appears only once in the Greek.
  12. במשפחותיהם. See below.

belong in its present position, may not also have originated as a mistaken gloss. It might have been entered in the margin as a correction for במשפחת המטה, and subsequently copied into the wrong place. It yields a translatable verse, with no other textual manipulation than the inevitable excision of אח: "And (they allocated) to the remaining descendants of Kohath, by their families, ten cities by lot from the half tribe of Manasseh." As Ch.45c corresponds to Jo.19, it is possible that the opening words of Jo.20 - ולמשפחת בני-קהת - suggested to a scribe that במשפחותיהם should be inserted before the opening words of Ch.46: ולבני קהת <sup>13</sup>.

What of Ephraim and Dan? The scheme, as we see it in the list of cities itself, seems to reflect an average of four cities per tribe, so ten cities would be right for two and a half tribes, but not for one. The suggestion that Ephraim and Dan be inserted here as in Jo is therefore attractive. Further, Ephraim (but not Dan) is mentioned in Ch's version of the list, in vv.51f. The text produced by the glossator's emendation, which we tentatively suggested above, could only be correct if Ch were deliberately omitting both of those two tribes. This is not impossible. The later mention of Ephraim comes in a passage where the text is confused. It adjoins the occurrence of Shechem, which is normally placed in Manasseh.

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13. The unusual long form of the suffix may give the word a claim to be considered original; it is found also in Gen.viii.19 and Jo.xviii.21, both with the preposition <sup>ל</sup>. (The shorter form also regularly has this preposition). But probably it represents no more than an effort to cover as many as possible of the letters of a desperate piece of text. The shorter form occurs in the two following verses.

So it is conceivable that Ephraim might have been omitted throughout by one hand, and subsequently reintroduced in v.51 by another. As for Dan, In their notes on 1 Chr.vii.12, Rothstein and Rudolph show a motive for a late writer to leave this tribe out of a list of holy places. Rudolph quotes from Irenaeus the expectation that the Antichrist would arise in Dan. If some such idea was current in the Chronicler's time, it would not appear a fit place for Levites. Similar considerations might apply to Ephraim, the core of the 'idolatrous' northern kingdom and the other seat of the calf cult. It is more probable, however, that in ch.vi as in ch.vii Dan alone was deliberately and consistently excluded, but that Ephraim was lost from v.46 by scribal error. The text of that verse might then be somewhat as follows: ולבני קהת הנותרים למשפחתם ממטה אפרים וממחצית מטה מנשה:

Ch.47-49 closely resemble Jo.6-8a<14>. The Chronicler regularly prefers the spelling 'Gershom' to Joshua's 'Gershon'. Commentators feel that 'half' should be inserted before 'tribe of Manasseh' in Ch.47; possibly the redundant קצ' of the previous verse was intended for this position. Rothstein and Rudolph would also introduce 'by lot' into this verse, to parallel vv.46 and 48 and Jo.6. It would be fairly easy for a scribe to overlook בגורל after בבשן. Neither emendation receives any support from the LXX. As we observed

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14. See above, pp.94f., for the slight divergences over 'families' and 'lot'.

above, 'by lot' is also missing from the MT of Jo.7.

It would appear that the summary in Ch only differs from that in Jo by accident of transmission, and not in substance, except for (i) the omission of the Aaronite part, and (ii) the possible deliberate exclusion of Dan at some stage.

After the summary section, Jo again sets out to give us the full list of Levite cities. It promises not merely 'these cities', as in v.3, but "these cities mentioned by name." In Ch, on the other hand, we are already part way through the list; indeed, it is more than likely that the original compiler intended to go no further. So while Jo embarks again on an introductory section, in Ch we find a concluding sentence, and then an attempt to graft on the rest of the city-list. It is therefore not surprising that Ch.49f. should differ in some details from Jo.9f.; rather, it is astonishing that so much of the material should be comparable.

In fact, Ch.49 is almost identical with Jo.8a, although the variations give it quite a different effect. Jo says: "The children of Israel gave the Levites these cities and their pasture-lands (as Yahweh commanded by the hand of Moses, by lot)." This is simply a summary, a concluding formula. Ch has: "The children of Israel gave the Levites the cities and their pasture-lands." The omission of the word 'these' leaves the sentence as a statement, whose point lies not in its forward or back reference, but whose function is to add something to what we know about the Levite cities: viz., that pasture-lands

(not otherwise mentioned in the summary) were included. This seems to me to be a good, straightforward point, which is lost in the priestly padding of Jo. It would carry the more weight if this were once the final sentence in the Chronicler's account of the Levite cities. It is also to be noticed that here and here alone in Ch the "people of Israel" are named as those who made the allocation. This seems to link the verse with one of the earlier editorial strands to be discerned in Jo<15>. Jo.8b, which has no parallel in Ch, would perhaps belong to a later stratum.

The last word of Jo.8, 'by lot', seems rather loosely attached; it is missing two words later, in the following sentence, where it appears in the corresponding text in Ch. Jo.9 runs: "And they allocated these cities, which he called by name, from the tribe of the descendants of Judah and from the tribe of the descendants of Simeon." Both the tense and number of the verb נָתַן seem inappropriate. If the reading is correct, the subject can only be Joshua, to be found in an earlier version of vv.1-2. In the present form of the introduction to the list, taken as a whole, he is not a sole agent, but stands with Eleazar and the patres familias; and verses 3-9a intervene, in which it is the people of Israel who make the allocation. The corresponding verse in Ch has the same verb in the same tense, but plural. The LXX adds to the

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15. See ch.IV, p.191. The 'pasture-lands' are mentioned in Ch.49 to bring the summary passage into line with the preceding verses, where each city is listed 'with its pasture-lands'. They do not carry the extreme emphasis given to them in the latest stratum of Jo (cf.Jo.42).

confusion by reading a singular verb in vv.9a and 11, and only one verb, in the plural, to serve either for v.9b or v.10a:

καὶ ἔδωκεν ἡ φυλὴ υἱῶν Ἰούδα καὶ ἡ φυλὴ υἱῶν Συμεὼν καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς φυλῆς υἱῶν Βενιαμὴν τὰς πόλεις τούτας· καὶ ἐπεκλήθησαν (A: ἐπεκληρώθησαν) (v.10) τοῖς υἱοῖς Ἀαρὼν ἀπὸ τοῦ δήμου τοῦ Κάαθ τῶν υἱῶν Λευί, ὅτι τοῦτο ἐγενήθη ὁ κλήρος. (v.11) καὶ ἔδωκεν (A: ἔδωκαν) αὐτοῖς τὴν Καραθαμβὸκ κτλ.

It would appear that a h had been omitted, by haplography, from ΠΥΩΔ the first two times it appeared in the translator's Hebrew text of v.9, but not the third<16>; the verb of v.9 would then be made to agree with the nearer part of the following subject. It could also seem that both ἐπεκλήθησαν and ἐπεκληρώθησαν were required, together with one or two additional words (such as τὰ ὀνόματα αὐτῶν); they might easily have been lost by homoeoteleuton, though it is remarkable that different manuscripts preserve each verb. The fact that they are passive has suggested the pointing לִּנְתַּן in v.9b, giving an impersonal passive with retained direct object<17>. The Greek is unanimous that this verb should be plural, and past (aorist)<18>.

Whatever the construction of this clause, it is plain that so far in Jo no Levite cities have been named; the

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16. The tribe of Benjamin seems to have been introduced, in a construction differing from that of Judah and Simeon, from the parallel passage in Ch. It is redundant, in view of Benjamin's due appearance in v.17.
  17. BH (3rd ed.). This does not avoid the difficulty of the tense.
  18. Holmes suggests that the present text stems from a misreading of לִּנְתַּן as לִּנְתַּן (Joshua, p.72). There is no support for this except the somewhat remote parallel in Jo.xx.7.



reference of 9b must therefore be to cities that follow. The verse leads on to v.10, and is indeed incomplete without it, as Rudolph points out<sup><19></sup>. In fact, they are practically one sentence, with the verb '77' serving a resumptive purpose. We might ignore it and paraphrase the two verses: 'From the tribes of Judah and Simeon they allotted the following<sup><20></sup> specifically named cities to the Aaronites, of the clan of Korah and tribe of Levi, because the lot fell to them first'. In Ch, on the other hand, the corresponding verses have been separated because of the rearrangement of the sections. V.50 corresponds to Jo.9, each following the summary section. Jo.10, however, finds its closest parallel in Ch.39, both verses being prefixed to the digression on Hebron,

Ch.50 is, in itself, straightforward enough up to the last three words; it may be translated: "And they gave by lot, from the tribe of the sons of Judah and from the tribe of the descendants of Simeon and from the tribe of the sons of Benjamin, these cities which they call by names." As the text stands, the last clause seems to be an introduction, to be paraphrased "and these are their names," or "namely:." But no list of cities follows; indeed, those from the three tribes named here have already been given in vv.42-5. A summarising sense might be found, such as 'which they specified by name'. This is not easy to derive from the text as it stands; as in Jo.9, the tense of the verb is inappropriate<sup><21></sup>, and the final

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19. Commentary, p.63.

20. 77N7 - not in Ch.

21. As in Jo.9, little is to be gained by repointing as a

word seems to need at least re-pointing to include the article, or perhaps the emendation suggested by BH, בשם. Either of these would offer the sense 'by their names'. Alternatively, the parallel reading in Jo could be considered, בשם, 'by name'. But the fact is, any reference whatsoever to the towns of Judah, Simeon and Benjamin is out of place here, unless in some respect they are not covered by the general concluding formula of the previous verse. The Aaronite cities were listed in vv.42-5 - where, to be sure, of the three tribal areas concerned, only Benjamin was actually named. Then a briefer account was given of the allocations to the other clans of Levi. This has been rounded off with the summary (v.49) "So the people of Israel gave the Levites the cities with their pasture lands." What remains to be said? Nothing; unless (a) we wish to know the names of the other Levite cities, a matter dealt with in the following paragraphs; or (b) we are dissatisfied that Judah and Simeon have not been mentioned; or (c) we feel that the Aaronites require special mention apart from the common Levites. This last motive might have been plausible, if v.50 had made any mention of Aaron. But as the recipients of the cities are not here specified, even by so much as a pronoun, one really can not discern a sub-group in this verse being contrasted with the Levites as a whole in v.49. As for (b), it does not account for the presence of

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niph'al. Rudolph (p.60) translates יִקְרָא as 'read', rendering the clause: "which you can read above by name" ("die man oben mit Namen liest"). If the verb is to be taken in the same sense as in Jo.9, 'name', he considers it must be emended to a perfect (יִקְרָא) "which they (indefinite) have named (above)".

Benjamin, which was mentioned in v.45. True, this tribe is omitted in v.50 by the principal LXX MSS, but this is most simply explained as harmonisation with Jo.9.

Two alternatives remain. One is to suppose that this verse was intended to complete the summary of vv.46-48, so that all the tribes were named within the one paragraph. It would then be a postscript, referring back to the detailed material relating to the Aaronites in vv.42ff.; and we might paraphrase it thus: 'they had also of course allocated the cities named above, out of the tribes of Judah, Simeon and Benjamin.' This seems to be the way Rothstein wishes to take it<sup>22</sup>. We can agree with him that the text of Ch up to this point constitutes a logical unit, listing the Aaronite cities in detail and summarising the others. We may also grant that, in making this distinction, the compiler reveals his priestly interests; the other motive which has been suggested, that only the Aaronite cities remained in Israelite hands in the Chronicler's time<sup>23</sup>, is wrecked on the fact that most of the southern cities listed were by then beyond the border of Judah. However, 'named above' is not a natural interpretation of the Hebrew; and as a postscript to what has gone before, the sentence seems singularly clumsy and unnecessary. If an editor were trying to complete the summary section in Ch from a text such as we have in Jo, he would surely have made his

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22. Commentary, pp.126f., referring to Benzinger, Die Bücher der Chronik.

23. Rudolph, op.cit. p.61, quotes Rothstein as mentioning this argument.

insertion before v.46 - where, to be sure, it would have been even more obviously redundant.

The other possibility is that, with Rudolph<sup><24></sup>, we should take the verse in a somewhat similar sense, but attach it to what follows instead of to the preceding section. It then serves to introduce the detailed lists of cities allocated to the other Levite groups, with a back-reference to the Aaronite list which has already been given. We might then translate it thus, as the start of a new paragraph: 'Now they had (already) allotted the cities which have been named, from the tribes of the sons of Judah, the sons of Simeon and the sons of Benjamin. Then to the families<sup><25></sup> of the sons of Kohath . . .'. The last clause of the Hebrew remains difficult, but in other respects this alternative is a marked improvement over the other. Whereas a reference to the Aaronite cities is wholly superfluous at the end of the summary section, it is by no means out of place where the detailed allocation is to be resumed. Indeed, the resumption would seem a little abrupt if it began at v.51, without some such introduction as this. So whereas the verse could only weaken the ending of the summary section, which is drawn to a firm close in v.49, it has a purpose to serve at the head of the following section. This interpretation receives some further support from the fact that the corresponding verse, Jo.9, is also of an

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24. Op.cit., p.63.

25. For the preposition see below, pp.109ff. It is possible that the change from ל to ב was influenced by the repeated בְּמִשְׁכָּנָם of the preceding verse.

introductory character. There the reference to 'these specified cities' is more natural than in Ch, because it stands at the head of the detailed list - or would do, but for the intrusion of the note on Hebron. One can only suppose that such a sentence introduced an earlier edition of the city list. The editor who added Ch.51ff. to the previous material no doubt found this verse standing immediately after the summary section in his source, as it does in Jo. We must suppose that he took it over, with the minimum (or less) of alteration, because it bore some relation to what he wished to say.

It emerges clearly that the run of the text in Jo.9f. is more natural and logical than that of the corresponding verses in Ch, especially when allowance is made for the disruption caused by the introduction of the explanatory sentence about Hebron (vv.11f.). We are bound to conclude that Jo preserves the earlier order of the material, giving the summary first, and then listing the cities 'by name'. The compiler of Ch has taken such an account as is to be found in Jo, wrenched it apart, and put the pieces together again in a different order, leaving jagged edges. Yet his actual text is in places simpler and more concise than that of Jo. This is true particularly of the introductions to the lists of cities allotted to the Levite clans. To these formulae we shall now turn our attention.

## 2. The clan framework

The clan framework - that is, the editorial material introducing and concluding the groups of cities allocated to

the Aaronites, the rest of the Kohathites, the Gershonites and the Merarites<26> - presents some of the most interesting divergences between Jo.xxi and 1 Chr.vi. These variations consist largely of words and sentences in Jo which are not found in Ch. In addition, however, it seems possible to detect a different use of the term 'families'.

(a) Introductory formulae in 1 Chr.vi

Since these parts of Ch are not only shorter but also in general simpler than their counterparts in Jo, we will take them as our starting point. The basic introductory formula seems to be "To the sons of . . ." This occurs in its plain form in v.56, and with a verb in v.42. Elsewhere it has been slightly expanded. In v.62, the text has been questioned. It seems to say: "To the rest of the sons of Merari," and as no other group of Merarites has been mentioned, this would be nonsense. but what is meant is that Merari was the last of the clans of Levi to be listed. We have had Kohath and Gershom; Merari is left. This is confirmed by the verses of Jo which introduce and conclude the Merarite list. Jo.34 is closely parallel to Ch.62, with two additions which do not affect this question. But in Jo.40, which closes the Merarite list, there is an expansion to put the sense beyond dispute: "to the sons of Merari . . . the rest of the families of the Levites." It is not impossible to derive this sense from Ch.62

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26. Jo.10,13,19,20,26,27,33,34,40; Ch.39b,42,45c,51,55c,56,62.

as it stands<27>, although it can only be expressed in English by a paraphrase: "To the others, the sons of Merari . . ."

Most of the other expansions in the introductory formulae in Ch arise from the need to refer to a part of a clan or tribe. Thus v.39b shows that the "sons of Aaron" constitute a "family of the Kohathite (clan)"; and in v.56 the MT refers to the half tribe of Manasseh as a "family", or sub-tribal unit<28>. V.51 presents difficulties, on any view, and one can scarcely avoid the conclusion that the text is corrupt. It may be literally translated: "And of the families of the sons of Kohath, now the cities of their territory were from the tribe of Ephraim"<29>. Several points arise. First, all the other introductory sentences in Ch start with 'to' or 'and to'; and so do all the corresponding verses in Jo, including the parallel to the text in question. Further, this preposition is necessary to the sense; without it, the idea of 'allocation' is not conveyed. In view of the confusion which arose over the use of the term 'families', as we shall see, it is perhaps not too difficult to correct the preposition here.

Secondly, we have already had the allocation of cities to the Aaronite 'family' of Kohathites, in vv.42-45. That list is not going to be repeated. Is it within the tolerance

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27. Pace Curtis, Rothstein, Galling, ad loc., Rudolph translates "Den jetzt noch Übrigen, den Söhnen Meraris", without comment.

28. LXX here reads a plural, possibly under the influence of Jo.27.

29. This is also the sense given by LXX.

of Hebrew logic, that the coming allocation should simply be introduced as that of the Kohathite families, without qualification? Can one just assume that "the families of the sons of Kohath" means all the families except the Aaronites, when there is nothing in the immediate context to suggest such a limitation? Perhaps this is what prompted the change of preposition, making possible the RSV translation: "Some of the families of the sons of Kohath." But this is forced and unsatisfactory. The author's purpose in introducing the term 'families' here was to distinguish the Aaronite group, already dealt with, from the other 'families' of Kohath; and this can scarcely be done without using a word for 'other'. Such a term is found in the phrase which concludes the paragraph: ". . . for the family of the rest of the Kohathites"(Ch.55c). As we shall see, this does not sit naturally in its present context as a concluding formula, and one may wonder whether it might not be a misplaced correction for the first part of v.51. The only necessary alteration would be to repoint 'family' from construct singular to plural absolute - the minimum change required, even if it were not moved from its present context - or perhaps to remove the second preposition, giving the sense: "To the family (sub-clan) of the other sons of Kohath." The phrase would then be wholly appropriate as an introduction to the cities of the non-Aaronite Kohathites, and would make a good parallel to the other introductory formulae in Ch; it would give almost exactly what we find in Jo,20.



Thirdly, the middle phrase of the verse seems out of place: "now the cities of their territory (were) from the tribe of Ephraim." As we observed above<30>, 'territory' is not really an appropriate term for a handful of cities scattered over other tribes' lands; but as the same word has also been used in v.39, we probably have no warrant to change it to 'their lot', in line with Jo.20. Either word is equally superfluous here; throughout the 'clan framework' in Ch there is no other reference to territory or lot after v.39, the introduction to the whole Levite city passage<31>. And if this term is redundant (whichever it may be), the resumptive '7' seems altogether unwanted, coming as fourth word in its sentence. These same words appear in the comparable verse in Jo; but there the first half is much longer, being padded out with explanatory material, and there is a much stronger case for starting a new clause at this point: "And to the families of the Levite sons of Kohath, the rest of the sons of Kohath, - now the cities of their lot were from the tribe of Ephraim!" The possibilities then are (i) that Ch.51 is an unintelligently abbreviated version of Jo.20; (ii) that Jo.20 is an expanded version which makes much better sense; (iii) that the middle of Ch.51 has been lost; or (iv) that the text underlying Ch was corrupted, and the loss was made good after a fashion from Jo.

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30. P.93.

31. But it is remarkable that the term comes at the head of each part of the detailed list in Ch, like the phrase 'cities of refuge' (see below, p.136)

None of these possibilities are very attractive. For the first, we might imagine reasons why Ch should deliberately omit reference to Levites, but it seems the height of folly to leave out 'the rest of'. The second cannot be disproved; but it is not easy to conceive a sentence so natural and typical of Jo being derived from one so awkward as Ch.51, which must then be presumed to be corrupt. The third is simple, if we can assume that Ch.51 originally resembled Jo.20; then we need only suppose that the scribe's eye leapt from the first occurrence of "sons of Kohath" to the second, omitting all that lay between. The difficulty here is that none of the other introductory formulae in Ch are anything like so long and elaborate as this would have been; as we shall see, the omitted material is largely characteristic of Jo and foreign to Ch. We are then driven to the fourth and last possibility, that the text was damaged, and an attempt made to fill the gap from Jo. So the latter half of Jo.20, from the second occurrence of "sons of Kohath," has been grafted on to the first three words of Ch.51, which happened to end in "sons of Kohath," - with rather unfortunate results<sup>32</sup>. This is not the only point in Ch where we must suspect textual damage at some stage of transmission. Such a hypothesis accords well with the suggestion above, that Ch.55c might have originated as a marginal correction for this verse - a note either overlooked (perhaps already wrongly entered in the text) when the passage was 'made good' from Jo, or perhaps entered subsequently from

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32. This must have been before 'boundary' was changed to 'lot' in Jo.20. See above, p.93.

a better MS<33>.

If then we are on the right lines, Ch.51 would originally have read: "To the sub-clan (or 'families') of the other sons of Kohath (they allotted) from the tribe of Ephraim . . ."

This would be closely parallel to the introductions to the Gershomite and Merarite lists, vv.56 and 62. But it raises a further difficulty; because the sentence ends here, and a new verb follows: "And they gave them . . ." As the text stands, this new start is necessary because the resumptive phrase introduced into the middle of v.51, "now their cities were . . .", has cancelled the idea of 'allotting' which has run through the whole list since it was stated in v.42, "and to the sons of Aaron they allotted . . ." After the interruption, the idea has to be resumed, so that it may continue to govern the rest of the lists of cities as its direct objects. So v.52 has to begin explicitly: "And they allotted to them ..."

This repetition of the main verb of the whole list would not have been necessary with v.51 in the original form we have suggested, as it is unnecessary (and indeed absent) from the introductions to the two following clan lists, vv.56 and 62. And we are encouraged to believe that it had no original place in vv.51f. when we observe that it makes nonsense, or awkward sense at best, of the tribal arrangement of the list. The verb divides the "tribe of Ephraim" from the list of cities;

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33. Cf. Jo.40, where the author resorts to a very similar device to that in v.20. This supports the view that the resumptive clause in Ch.51 has its origin in the text of Jo.

so that instead of reading how they allotted some cities from Ephraim, and some from Manasseh, we are given the initial impression that the whole allocation is from Ephraim, and we stumble on Manasseh with a jolt: " . . now the cities of their territory were from the tribe of Ephraim. And they gave them the cities of refuge, Shechem" etc., "and out of the half-tribe of Manasseh, Aner" etc.

It might be argued that it was not out of place to restate the verb when the Chronicler resumed the detailed list of cities, after the interruption caused by the summary passage. two comments may be made. Firstly, the idea of 'allotting' continues implicitly through the summary verses 46-48, and is restated both in v.49 and in v.50; it scarcely needs further repetition. Secondly, if v.50 introduces the second part of the list, as we have argued, then surely the verb is sufficiently 'restated' when it appears in this verse; it is not required in v.52 as well. However, the possibility must remain open that the verb in v.52 may be a relic of an earlier stage in the history of the text, before vv.50f. took their present form and place<34>.

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34. In Ch, 'they gave', 'allotted', occurs only in vv.40,42,49,50 and 52. Of these, vv.49 and 50 are summarising sentences. 40 and 42 are broadly parallel in sense, and neither contains mention of the tribe from which the cities are taken. And in 51f., as we have seen, the tribe is inserted clumsily. It is however unlikely that these irregularities arose because the verb was in the way when the tribal names were being inserted. Rather, the verbs became necessary when the structure of the list was complicated with additions and interruptions. If it were not for the intrusion of the summary section, v.51 would probably have needed no more special treatment than vv.56 and 62 (where there is

The one remaining passage where the Chronicler seems to have expanded the basic introductory formula may be treated briefly. The last clause of Ch.39, "because the lot was for them," has no parallel in Ch. It explains the method by which the first allocation was made; and we are left to assume that the others followed the same pattern. In this, the city lists differ from the summary, where it is regularly stated that the cities were distributed "by lot"<sup>35</sup>. Neither this clause, nor the preceding description of the Aaronites as a sub-group of Kohath, are repeated in v.42. There, after the digression on Hebron, only the very briefest introduction is given to the following list of Aaronite towns; it is presumably to be regarded as a recapitulation of v.39 (which has got separated from the city-list to which it refers), and not as the original form of introduction to this section of the list.

(b) Concluding formulae in 1 Chr.vi

When we turn to the concluding formulae of the clan lists in Ch, we find we have very little material to deal with. There is no such ending to the Gershomite and Merarite lists. The Aaronite list has one (v.45c), and so, after a fashion, has that of the rest of Kohath (v.55c). The latter is unique among all the concluding formulae of the clan lists in Jo and Ch in at least three respects. All the others open with "All

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no verb); and the summary section could not have been composed before the division of the city list between the tribes.

35. Ch.46,48; the expression is omitted from v.47, probably in error. See above, p.99.

the cities ..."; they all give the number of cities in the group; and they are all complete sentences. We may add that there is no more need for a conclusion of any sort here than there is in v.61, and that a far stronger case could be made for one in v.66, the end of the whole list. Finally, the phrase is in the characteristic form of an introduction. So we have suggested above that it was intended as a correction for v.51, where the text is corrupt.

Ch.45c, on the other hand, offers a simple numerical summary, showing the same sort of relation to its slightly longer counterpart in Jo.19 as exists between the introductory sentences of Ch and Jo. It is remarkable only in being unique. Not only does Ch have no other concluding formulae; within the city lists, it gives no other numbers. This at once prompts the observation that the summary section, which does count the cities, follows this verse immediately. It seems to have been the intention at one stage to list the Aaronite cities by name, and give no more than the numbers and tribes of the other clans' allocations. That being so, it is not unnatural that the numbers of the Aaronite cities should have been put in as well; particularly as the figure would no doubt be under the eye of the compiler, in the first verse (which he omitted) of the summary section in his exemplar<36>.

From what has been said of the simple character of this

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36. For the reasons we have given above, it is likely that the summary section originally stood at the head of the city list, as it does in Jo. It follows that it was not first composed by the compiler of Ch.

sentence, the last word must be excepted. This word, "by their families," is unnecessary to the sense, and indeed obscure. To begin with, it has a long form of the suffix, which while not unique in the Bible is found nowhere else in the formulae under discussion. More seriously, it exhibits a use of the term different from that found elsewhere in these chapters, and especially in these formulae in Ch. In the summary section in Ch we have seen the word used in a vague sense, 'by their families' <37>; but never at the end of a sentence, and never with the preposition ל. And in the introductory formulae in Ch, we have found that the word always means a sub-group of a tribe or clan. It is used in this way in v.39, in apposition to "the sons of Aaron;" it is the more disconcerting to find it used in a quite different way at the end of the Aaronite allocation.

It is difficult to escape the conclusion that the text here is corrupt. Most commentators <38> emend to "with their pasture-lands," in line with Jo; but this is hard to justify, unless we are to take it for granted that Ch is derived from Jo. There is little enough resemblance between the two words, and no indication at all that the Chronicler would have wished to mention pastures here. They are attached to almost every city in his list, but they do not appear in any other connection, except in the general summary, v.49. It may be argued that

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37. Ch.47,48.

38. E.g. Curtis, Rothstein, Rudolph, Galling ad loc., and BH. Others, e.g. Myers, Michaeli, translate the text as it stands without comment.

the relevant contexts do not appear in Ch; in Jo also, there is no mention of pastures in the introductory formulae nor in the summary section, but they figure regularly and with emphasis in the conclusions to paragraphs<39>. So surely they should be mentioned in the one concluding formula in Ch? But we must observe that there is a regular feature of the introductory sentences in Jo which has no counterpart in Ch, viz. the reference to the Levites; so we cannot draw conclusions for Ch from even the most constant elements of Jo. Unfortunately, we cannot go beyond negative conclusions; the text is faulty, and the quest for a cure must continue<40>.

(c) Introductory formulae in Jo.xxi

The introductions to the clan lists in Jo contain the wording of those in Ch, with minor alterations, but with substantial additions. These expansions seem to be made for the sake of clarity, and in particular to bring out the relations of the various groups within the structure of the tribe of Levi. "Levites" or "sons of Levi" are mentioned in each of the introductions, except v.13, which is a mere brief resumption of the full form in v.10.

Jo.10 differs from Ch.39b in two respects. To begin with, we are told not only that the Aaronites are Kohathites, but also that the Kohathites are "(some) of the sons of Levi." Possibly to harmonise with this extra phrase, the preposition

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39. Jo.19,26,33,41. The one exception is v.40; but the two following verses repair the omission!

40. See above, pp.97f., for a tentative suggestion.



with 'family' has been changed, as well as its number, so that in place of Ch's "To the sons of Aaron, a family of the Kohathites," we have in Jo "To the sons of Aaron, of the families of the Kohathites, of the sons of Levi." And secondly, Jo amplifies the following clause, making it clear that the reason the Aaronites were dealt with first was that "the lot fell to them first"<41>. Commentators again want to read 'first' in Ch, on the grounds that the sense demands it (and in the belief that Ch was derived from Jo). But in fact the addition is a doubtful improvement. In making the sense more particular and precise for the Aaronites, the editor has weakened its general application to all the clan allocations. No mention is made of the second, third and fourth lots. As it comes in Ch, the clause sets the scene: the distribution of cities was by lot; it could have been repeated verbatim for Kohath, Gershon and Merari, but there was no need. Jo's version tends to emphasise that Aaron is a special case. - Perhaps we should not make too much of this. The word 'first' is in any case missing from the LXX, and may have come into the text at a late stage<42>.

Jo.10 speaks of 'Kohathites' and 'sons of Levi'; in the other introductions we find 'sons of Kohath', 'sons of Gershon' etc., and 'Levites'. The exception is the resumptive verse 13, where Jo does not relate the 'sons of Aaron' to their clan

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41. Since the adjective is feminine, and 'lot' is always masculine elsewhere, it is perhaps best to take 'first' adverbially.

42. Cf. Jo.4a, where the word 'first' is absent from a similar context.

and tribe, but defines Aaron as "the priest." In v.19 the word is plural: "the sons of Aaron, the priests." It is difficult to say whether either form should be assimilated to the other<sup>43</sup>. The effect in both cases is similar, to produce an emphasis foreign to Ch on the distinct status of the Aaronites over against the other Levites.

The development of the next introduction, Jo.20, can be easily understood if we were on the right lines when we suggested that the corresponding verse, Ch.51, was originally something like "To the sub-group (or: 'families') of the other sons of Kohath . . ." Jo has added "the Levites" in its normal place, immediately after the clan name, and has thus introduced an ambiguity; "other" now stands nearer to "Levites" than to "sons of Kohath." So for the sake of clarity "the sons of Kohath" are repeated, giving a sentence: "And to the families of the sons of Kohath, the Levites, the rest of the sons of Kohath, from the tribe of Ephraim . . ." But Kohath was not a clan of Ephraim. The shape and momentum of the sentence have been lost, and there is nothing for it but to start it up again with a fresh verb. The obvious one, whose sense runs through the whole passage, and which is used in a somewhat similar position in v.11, is 'they gave'. One can only guess why it was not brought in here. One possible reason is that, in view of the various groups of people who had just been named, it would have been necessary to specify its subject. But nowhere in the city lists and their immediate framework

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43. See Holmes, Joshua, p.72.

is it said who made the allocations. However that may be, the editor chose a more impersonal expression: ". . . now the cities of their lot were from the tribe of Ephraim." Here his passion for unambiguous accuracy seems to have expired; as we remarked above, the cities of the non-Aaronite sons of Kohath were not all in Ephraim. And further, this latest addition cuts off the idea 'they allocated', which has been running through the whole passage since v.13; so it has to be re-established at the beginning of the following verse. In these various stages, the introduction "And to the families of the other sons of Kohath (they allotted) from the tribe of Ephraim, Shechem" etc., grew into "And to the families of the sons of Kohath, the Levites, the rest of the sons of Kohath, - now the cities of their lot<sup>44</sup> were from the tribe of Ephraim. And they gave them Shechem," etc.

Jo.27 is almost the same as Ch.56; but the difference is significant. 'The Levites' have as usual been introduced; this time, however, not immediately after the clan name, but after the word 'family'. This word is thus separated from 'the half tribe of Manasseh', to which it belonged in Ch: "the sub-group of the half tribe of Manasseh," that is, 'the sub-group which is the half tribe of Manasseh'. Further, it is made plural, and almost meaningless: "the sons of Gershom, of the families of the Levites." There was some point in speaking of the family structure of Kohath, which (unlike the

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44. LXX, and Ch.51, have 'boundaries', 'territory', which may be an earlier reading here. See above, p.93.

other clans) was divided between Aaronites and others; similarly, there was point in indicating that the half tribe of Manasseh was in some sense a 'family' group (though the point was not made in Ch.55//Jo.25). But all the clans were 'of the families of the Levites'; why single out Gershon? One can only conclude that the editor has missed the force of the word. It so happens that in vv.10 and 20 it applied to a Levite group, and he has made it do the same here. After this transposition it can easily and naturally be made plural, as in v.20 and Ch.51; indeed, it is always plural in Jo. The word is not represented in LXX, and there may have been some doubt about it in antiquity<45>.

In the introduction to the Merarite clan list, Jo.34, the writer introduces 'the Levites' in their normal place, immediately after the clan name; and for once this addition improves the logic of the sentence. Instead of having to understand "the rest of the sons of Merari" as 'the rest, i.e. the sons of Merari', as in Ch.62, we read "the sons of Merari, the rest of the Levites." The other addition (or rather, word not found in the corresponding verse of Ch), makes no such improvement. Where Ch has simply "to the sons of Merari," Jo gives "to the families of the sons of Merari." Since the whole clan is meant, there is no point in mentioning its subdivisions. One can only suppose that the compiler had come to feel that the

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45. The text of Jo required a further small change, once "from the family of" had been separated from "the half-tribe of Manasseh," viz., adding the preposition 'from' to 'the half tribe'.

formula was not complete if it did not refer somehow to 'families', either of Levi or of one of its clans. We have noticed that Ch.56 uses that term of the half tribe of Manasseh; Jo does not tolerate such a 'secular' use, but transfers it to the Levites (v.27). This rather vague and strictly Levite usage is also found in the summary section, both in Jo and in Ch, where the cities are allotted to the clans 'according to their families'. The text offers no explanation of this nebulous expression, and one can only suppose that it has degenerated into a cliché. The passages we have been considering may perhaps show some of the stages through which it has passed. In Ch's clan-list framework, we can perceive a purpose for the word; it designates an independent sub-group of a named clan or tribe. In Jo's framework, this sense is lost; the term is used vaguely and almost at random, always in the plural, and always within the tribe of Levi. Finally, it finds a regular place in the standard formulae of the summary section.

(d) Concluding formulae in Jo.xxi

In discussing the introductory sentences, we have been able to compare the corresponding passages in Jo and Ch. When we turn to the endings, this is not normally possible, as in Ch only the Aaronite list has a proper concluding formula. Disregarding its final word, which as we have seen raises difficulties, it says simply: "All their cities were thirteen cities." This form is the back-bone of each of the sentences in Jo. Two further features are regularly included: the name of the clan (instead of Ch's mere pronoun), and a reference

to 'pasture-lands'. The form is well illustrated by v.19:

"All the cities of the sons of Aaron, the priests, were thirteen cities with their pasture-lands." The only deviation from the norm is the description of the Aaronites as 'the priests'; whereas Jo regularly draws attention to the Levite status of the clans in the introductory sentences, it is perhaps remarkable that the term 'Levite' does not occur in the conclusions until the end of the whole city list (v.40).

All the other closing sentences contain a further feature: the phrase 'to the families of' or 'according to their families'. Thus in Jo.33 we read: "All the cities of the Gershonites according to their families were thirteen cities with their pasture-lands." Here and in v.40 the word seems to add nothing to the sense; as in the summary sections, it is a mere cliché. The position is slightly different in v.26, where the word order is unusual, and 'families' is used as in Ch.55c (save that in Jo it has been made plural): "All the cities were ten, with their pasture-lands, for the families of the other sons of Kohath," i.e. the non-Aaronite group. This odd sentence structure can only be explained on the hypothesis that the second half of the sentence is misplaced. It belongs after the word 'cities' - which is itself in an anomalous form; it should either have the article, as in Jo.40, or be in the construct, as in the other concluding formulae. The pattern also seems to require that 'cities' be repeated after the number; it could easily have been overlooked because of its similarity to the two preceding words. We should then have:

"All the cities of the families of the other sons of Kohath were ten cities with their pasture-lands." This differs from the standard form only in its necessarily extended description of the clan-group. The misplaced phrase is almost exactly Ch.55c (the parallel verse), which as we have seen was probably at one stage a marginal note or correction. Jo.26 seems to offer further evidence of its wanderings in the course of transmission.

The Merarite list again has a longer conclusion, but here there is no question of a dislocation of the text. The normal form is followed, up to the point where we should expect to find the number of cities: "All the cities of the sons of Merari, according to their families, . ." But before we go any further we have to be reminded that this clan was the last of the Levites: "the rest of the families of the Levites". And now the sentence has gone on so long that the verb, hitherto implicit, and its subject have to be restated: "now their lot was twelve cities"<46>. Exceptionally, there is here no mention of the pasture-lands, probably through oversight at some stage. The term occurs at the end of the following verse, and v.42 is devoted to emphasising that none of these cities lacked its meadow.

This last verse, Jo.42, appears to be an appendix or afterthought. The section ends formally with v.41, where the conclusion-form is adapted to round off the whole city list:

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46. 'Lot' resumes the opening words of the sentence, 'all the cities'. See above, p.93 and n.4.

"All the cities of the Levites amid the possession of the children of Israel were forty-eight cities with their pasture-lands." This follows the usual pattern exactly, except that where in a clan context one might have read 'according to their families', we here find the more grandiose phrase 'amid the possession of the children of Israel'. As the word used for 'possession' is a technical term for tribal property<sup>47</sup>, there is more than a hint here of a contrast between the cities allotted to the Levites and the lands held by the other tribes.

We have been treating the introductory and concluding formulae in Jo as expansions and developments of the formulae in Ch. Would it be possible to turn the tables, and regard the Ch passages as simplified and edited versions of the material in the earlier-published book? Such an exercise would require a great deal of ingenuity. Chronicles is, as a whole, later than Joshua; but this is almost the only fact in favour of such a realignment. We should have to suppose that the general tendency of texts to grow and accrete had here been reversed; that the compiler of Ch had such an objection to the term 'Levites' that he removed it from all the introductions, - although this whole major section of his work is devoted to their cities and genealogies; and that, for obscure reasons, he had set his face against concluding formulae (except in the case of the Aaronites). We should be faced with the paradox that, apparently by skilful editing, he had in several places succeeded in reducing the overloaded

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47. See above, ch. II n. 47.



sentences in Jo to simple and natural ones; though in others, such as v.50, he appears as a clumsy compiler. And finally, we should have to imagine that the Chronicler had found the term 'families' used in a general and vague sense, both in the introductions and in the summary section; and in the one case, but not the other, had so altered the syntax that the word took on a distinct meaning and began to make a real contribution to its context. It is scarcely necessary to go over the material in detail to show how difficult it would be to maintain such a position. Rather, we seem to have come as near as one could reasonably hope to a proof that the Levite city list in Chronicles is taken not from the book of Joshua, but from an earlier version of the material; and that Jo exhibits a further stage of its development.

### 3. The Cities of Refuge<48>

This conclusion seems to find support in the sentences stating the allocation to the Levites of the six cities of refuge listed in Jo.xx.7f.<49>. Here the general pattern appears to be that Ch picks the city name and the note of its

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48. For general discussions of the 'cities of refuge', see M. Löhr, Das Asylwesen im Alten Testament, Halle, 1930; N. M. Nicolsky, 'Das Asylrecht in Israel', ZAW 7, 1930, pp.146-175; J. Morgenstern, 'The Book of the Covenant' II and III, HUCA 7, 8-9, 1930, 1931-2, esp. footnotes to vol.7, p.204 and vol.8-9, p.83; S. Klein, 'Cities of the Priests and Levites and Cities of Refuge' (Heb.), Mehqarim Eres-Yisraeliyim III.4, 1934/5, pp.81-107; M. David, 'Die Bestimmungen über die Asylstädte in Josua xx', Qudtestamentische Studien 9, 1951, pp.30-48; M. Greenberg, 'The Biblical Conception of Asylum', JBL 78, 1959, pp.129-132; idem, art. 'City of Refuge', in The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, New York, 1962.

49. Jo.11,21,27,32,36,38; Ch.40,52,56,61,53,65.

location out of Jo.xx, adding the phrase "and its pasture-lands" (in conformity with the other entries in the Levite city lists); and that Jo then prefixes the designation "the city of refuge for the slayer." This pattern is found without variation in the cases of Golan, Kedesh, and Ramoth<50>. The text corresponding to Ch.63 is missing from some MSS of Joshua, and only appears in a very brief form in the others: "Bezer and its pasture-lands." This is most unfortunate, because this passage in Jo.xx,8 and Ch.63 is particularly interesting. Jo.xx,7 lists three cities west of the Jordan, and the following verse gives three to the east. Bezer is the first of the eastern group, and its position is made clear: "and beyond the Jordan, to the east of Jericho, they appointed Bezer in the wilderness on the tableland." It is open to question whether so elaborate an explanation is in place in Ch.63. On the one hand, this is indeed where the Merarite list crosses the Jordan. On the other, we have already made a similar crossing from west to east Manasseh with no more help than the mention of Bashan (v.56), and the return passage in the following verse receives no special notice at all. We can only suppose that the Chronicler derived this note from the tradition represented by Jo.xx,7f. Presumably the compiler moved the phrase "from the tribe of Reuben" from the end of the clause to its present place, before the city name, because that is the more usual order in the Levite city list<51>. However

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50. Ch.56,61,65; Jo.27,32,38; cf.Jo.xx.7f.

51. 'The Jordan' has been repeated, probably through an error in transmission. It looks as though the final letter of

that may be, the material of Jo.xx, which is straightforward both in itself and in its context, has been made an ungainly addition to a passage where it is not required.

Our impression that the compilers of Chronicles and Jo.xxi have been following Jo.xx.7f. is confirmed beyond all doubt when we observe that no other city in the Levite lists has a geographical note attached; that all of these six do have such notes (except Bezer in Joshua, where the text is doubtful); and that the notes are the same in the three passages<52>. And as the sentences in Ch are longer than in Jo.xx but shorter than in Jo.xxi, we should expect Ch to represent an intermediate stage in the development of the text. But as we shall see, such a view is not without difficulties.

We have noticed as a feature of the Jo passages that they always include a reference to the city as being a place of asylum, whereas this has not been mentioned in Ch in the four cases we have considered. When we turn to the other two, we find a different situation. Jo.xx.7 speaks simply of "Shechem in Mt. Ephraim." Ch.52 not only expands this by inserting "and its pasture-lands" after "Shechem," but prefixes a general statement of the character of the whole list: "And they gave them the cities of refuge, Shechem" etc. We shall return

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מִן־רֶחֶם has been attached to וְנֶחֱלָה, which was then read as וְנֶחֱלָה־רֶחֶם. Having lost its suffix, מִן־רֶחֶם now needed a preposition.

52. "The references to the cities of refuge in our list are thus clear secondary intrusions from the independent list of cities of refuge in the preceding chapter." (W. F. Albright, 'The List of Levitical Cities', p.52).

shortly to consider this surprising expression. Jo.21 replaces it with the usual formula: "And they gave them the city of refuge for the slayer, Shechem" etc.

The case of Hebron is complicated by the explanatory note which interrupts the beginning of both city lists. In each, asylum is not mentioned until after the digression; and when it comes, it takes the form we should expect on the analogy of Shechem. So Ch.42 reads: "To the sons of Aaron they gave the cities of refuge, Hebron" etc.<sup><53></sup>; whereas Jo.13 has "And to the sons of Aaron the priest they gave the city of refuge for the slayer, Hebron" etc. But it is where Hebron is first introduced, two verses earlier in each case, that we find a relation to Jo.xx. V.7 there reads: "And Kiriath Arba, that is, Hebron, in Mt. Judah." Ch.40 makes no mention of the alternative name: "And they gave them Hebron in the land of Judah, and its pasture-lands around it." Jo.11 has the best of both worlds: "And they gave them Kiriath (of) Arba, the father of Anak, that is, Hebron, in Mt. Judah, and its pasture-lands around it." It is noteworthy that the words in Jo which have no parallel in Ch, with their strange use of Arba as a personal name, are found letter for letter in Jo.xv.13: "Kiriath (of) Arba the father of Anak, that is, Hebron." The same ideas are found differently expressed in Jo.xiv.15. All these passages, except Jo.xx, are concerned with the special gift of Hebron to Caleb. Jo.11 and Ch.40 show this concern

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53. No significance can be found in the fact that in Ch 'pasture-lands' are omitted after Hebron and Jattir; it is probably due to scribal error.

in a somewhat negative way, in allocating Hebron and its pastures to the Levites; but the following verses of each passage go as far as they can, in identical words, to remedy the situation: "But the fields of the city and its villages had been given to Caleb the son of Jephunneh;" and Jo adds a term characteristic of P: "for his possession."

If we consider only Jo.xxi.11f. and Ch.40f., it is clear enough that Chronicles has the simpler and so presumably the earlier version. How could Hebron be a Levite city, when it had been given to Caleb? For some reason, the easiest and most satisfactory answer could not be given: that Caleb had handed it over. The next best was that Caleb should have the region of Hebron, and the Levites the city proper. This is exactly what Chronicles says, directly and simply; except that the pasture lands, which here as elsewhere go with the Levite city, are here alone described as surrounding it. The expansion in Jo is unnecessary, and scarcely relevant. It is prompted by the connection between Hebron under its other name, Kiriath-arba, and Caleb and the sons of Anak, which features so often in the book of Joshua; indeed, as we have seen, it is taken word for word from Jo.xv.13.

But when we turn to Jo.xx.7c we are confronted with a problem. Hitherto this chapter has appeared to be the source of the geographical notes in Ch. Here, however, the differences are conspicuous. Whereas both the Joshua passages speak of 'Mt. Judah', or 'the hill country of Judah', Ch has 'the land of Judah'. This may be a scribal error, the expression 'Mt.

Judah' being perhaps less common than 'Mt. Ephraim'(v.52). But what about the name 'Kiriath-arba'? It was not the normal name for the city at the time when Joshua was compiled; the five times it occurs in Genesis, Joshua and Judges it is always explained as meaning Hebron, and two of these passages explicitly refer to it as an archaism<sup>54</sup>. Was it then the original name in Jo.xx, to which the explanation "that is, Hebron" was later added? Or may we suppose that the original text read 'Hebron in the hill country of Judah', like the preceding phrase "Shechem in the hill country of Ephraim"? If so, then 'Kiriath-arba' would have been inserted by an editor as a piece of archaic colour. Such a note would be in keeping with the special interest in Hebron shown elsewhere in the book.

If this supposition is correct, we may conclude that all the geographical notes in Ch were derived, without exception, from an earlier version of what is now Jo.xx.7f. But we are now faced with the major question, Why should the Chronicler (or his predecessor) incorporate this material into the list of Levite cities, where it breaks the usual form of the list, and is in one case quite incongruous?

Noth<sup>55</sup> argues that the editor, finding Hebron at the head of the Levite city list, added the material from Jo.xx relating to Hebron as a refuge city, thus giving rise to the double entry. Having done that, he proceeded to add the other

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54. Gen.xxiii.2; Jo.xiv.15//Jdg.i.10; Jo.xv.54; xx.7. Neh.xi.25 surprisingly speaks of Kiriath-arba without naming Hebron.

55. M. Noth, Das Buch Josua, 2nd ed., p.127.

five cities of refuge to the Levite list, in more or less appropriate places. He supports this theory by observing that in some cases at least parts of the Levite city list are quoted elsewhere without the pertinent city of refuge<sup><56></sup>. This is an attractive view, but it can scarcely be demonstrated. The double entry is most naturally explained by the intrusion of the explanatory note about Caleb, after which the list has to be started again. And of the 'quotations' mentioned by Noth, one is by no means exact<sup><57></sup>; and the other concerns the tribe of Reuben, east of the Jordan (on which see below, section '5).

Further, whereas both Jo.xx and xxi distinguish these six as 'cities of refuge', Ch does not. As the text now stands, it contains only two references to 'asylum cities' (vv.42,52), both in the plural. Each stands immediately before the name of one of the towns of Jo.xx, like the corresponding formula in Jo.xxi. Commentators have therefore been almost unanimous in demanding that the Chronicler's plurals be assimilated to Joshua's singulars; because only a single city of refuge is named in each verse, and on the grounds that Ch is derived from Jo anyway<sup><58></sup>. We have seen reason to suspect that in general the Chronicler is here witness to an earlier version

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56. Jo.xiii,18//xxi,36f.; xix,35bb//xxi,32

57. Jo,xix,35bb: חֲמֵת רָקֵת וְכִנְרֵת; Jo,xxi,32: חֲמֵת־דָּאָר . . . וְאֶת־קִרְיָתֵן. Three of the refuge cities (Golan, Bezer and Ramoth) do not appear at all in Jo.xii-xix, and Shechem is mentioned only as lying near a boundary. Hebron and Kedesh, however, are duly listed as cities of Judah (xv,54) and Naphtali (xix,37).

58. E.g. Curtis, p.139; Rothstein, pp.121f.; Rudolph, p.58; BDB on מִקְלָט quoting Bertheau, Kautzsch and Kittel.

of the list. So we are left with the question, whether after all he could really be so surprisingly mistaken in these two places. Is it conceivable that so serious and conscientious a collector and editor of Israel's traditions should have been so ignorant or careless of the records preserved in Num.<sup>xxxv</sup>.9ff. and Jo.<sup>xx</sup>, that he could simply assume that all the following cities were 'cities of refuge', and corrupt the text of both verses accordingly? Or is there any discernible motive which might induce him to 'correct' the text in this way? One would have to suppose either that it was held by a major school of thought that all the Levite cities had been 'cities of refuge', or that the writer was anxious that they should be credited with such a status. Of the former there is no trace in the Bible<sup><59></sup>. And although we find ample signs of propaganda on behalf of the Levites elsewhere in Chronicles, these two little phrases are too shy and unobtrusive to make any point, unsupported as they are by any further statement or argument. Surely a deliberate polemical alteration would leave us in no doubt about its meaning and intention<sup><60></sup>.

The remaining alternatives are that the text of Ch.<sup>42</sup> and 52 has either been corrupted by accident, or else represents the earlier reading. The corruption would indeed be an easy one, involving only the transposition of one letter. But it could scarcely have happened by pure coincidence in both verses.

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59. There are of course indications that, early in the monarchy, any altar might give asylum. However, as we shall see, the cities allotted to the Levites did not all have notable altars; and some famous shrines are not on the list.  
 60. Cf. e.g. Jo.<sup>42</sup>, an editorial addition to the list.



We should need to assume that one verse had been corrupted, and the other assimilated to it. This possibility can not be excluded. These are the only two places where the term וָפֶקֶד, 'refuge', is used in Chronicles. In each case the phrase is followed by a list of cities. A copyist, forgetful of or unfamiliar with the provisions for 'cities of refuge' in P, might perhaps have been misled, and applied the phrase in each case to the whole list. But what might be understandable in a single ignorant scribe is more difficult to attribute to the whole manuscript tradition. Are we to believe that all the scholars who compared, revised, annotated and translated these verses were equally mistaken? For there appears to be no ancient textual tradition which preserves the singular reading here.

While this possibility can not be completely dismissed, then, it has the whole weight of the manuscript evidence against it; so we are bound to give serious thought to the alternative, that Chronicles preserves the earlier reading. We are at once encouraged in this when we compare Jo.13 with Ch.42. The latter reads precisely as one would expect, if the expression 'cities of refuge' were intended to apply to the whole following paragraph: "And to the sons of Aaron they gave the cities of refuge, Hebron and Libnah and its pastures and Jattir . . ." Keeping the same word order, but applying the singular 'city of refuge' to Hebron alone, Jo looks a little stilted and derivative: "And to the sons of Aaron the priest they gave the city of refuge for the slayer, Hebron and its pastures,

and Libnah and its pastures, . ." It would be more natural for the descriptive phrase to follow the noun to which it belongs, as the geographical expressions do in Jo.xx and in the city lists<61>. In the same way, Ch.52 reads more naturally than Jo.21. In fact, the position of the phrase 'city' or 'cities of refuge' in both Jo and Ch is difficult to explain unless it originally applied to the whole of the following list. This sense becomes possible if we can break away from the priestly definition of 'cities of refuge' and suppose that the text goes back to a time when all Levite cities were in some sense places of מקלט. We might assume that originally the expression stood only at the head of the city list, but that when the list was broken by the introduction of the summary section, it was repeated at the beginning of the second part. Jo understands the phrase as describing only the six places listed in ch.xx, and modifies the text of the Levite city list accordingly; he makes Ch's 'cities of refuge' singular in both places, and introduces the phrase where the remaining 'asylum-towns' are named<62>.

The use and etymology of the term מקלט neither illuminate the question, nor inhibit its discussion. The word is found only in Num.xxxv, Jo.xx and xxi, and 1 Chr.vi. The P texts cohere closely, and present a consistent picture. In them,

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61. Cf. also the more extended descriptive material attached to Kiriath-arba in Jo.11.

62. Even where, on this hypothesis, the Jo compiler himself introduces the phrase 'the city of refuge', he places it before the city name, no doubt on the analogy of Hebron and Shechem, where this order was given by his exemplar.

מקלט is always used of 'cities of refuge' for the slayer (צִיָּלוֹן), and is usually in the context of the Levite cities<sup>63</sup>. Num.xxxv.1-8 lays down that the Levites should be given "the six cities of refuge, where you shall permit the slayer to flee," and forty-two more. In the rest of the chapter the purpose of these six cities is explained. Anyone who committed homicide could flee from "the avenger of blood" to the nearest 'city of refuge', which would protect him from immediate revenge. In due course he would be tried by "the congregation" (קָהָל, v.24), which would either find him guilty of deliberate murder and hand him over to the 'avenger' for execution, or, if the death were shown to be an accident, would return him to the refuge city. There he would have to stay until the amnesty at the death of the high priest (v.28.) The same explanation is summarised, in similar terms, in Jo.xx.1-6,9, and is implicit in the following chapter, in the expression "the city of refuge for the slayer." The reference to the high priest shows that this version of the institution is post-exilic. It is however also described in Dt.xix, in different terms. Three cities are to be set aside in Canaan (and, as an afterthought, three more east of the Jordan), "so that any manslayer (צִיָּלוֹן) can flee to them"(v.3). As in Numbers, it is made clear that the accidental killer is to be protected, and the wilful murderer is to be handed over to the "avenger of blood" (קָהָל הַלָּוִי, v.12), apparently on the representations of the elders of his home town; but the procedure is obscure.

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63. The possible exception is Jo.xx, where the Levite cities come in the following chapter.

There is no mention of the 'congregation', nor of any other judicial body, except these 'elders'. It seems that Deuteronomy is doing no more than adapt a procedure familiar to its contemporaries. This would fit in well enough with Wellhausen's view<sup>64</sup>, that 'refuge cities' were a by-product of the 'centralisation of the cult' under Josiah. Hitherto, a manslayer had been able to find sanctuary at the major shrine of his area. (We may add, that there would be a well-known traditional way of handling such cases). When the local sanctuaries were abolished, the defendant might find himself at the mercy of those whose moral duty it was to avenge the slain, unless he happened to live within easy reach of Jerusalem. So Deuteronomy, the law-book of the Josianic reformation, provided for secular provincial refuge cities, as it also provided for the secular slaughter of domestic animals outside the one sanctuary. In doing so, it made the practical point that these cities should be made as easy as possible to reach - a detail overlooked by the priestly writer.

Although he does not use the word מקלט, it is clear enough that the Deuteronomist is describing the same institution as we have found in P; and it would appear to be an institution for which there was no need before the centralisation of the cult. Indeed, the technical term for it does not appear in literature earlier than P. This may be interpreted as meaning that it had not yet been coined by the time Dt.xix was written.

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64. Prolegomena, p.162. See also M. David, op.cit., p.38; M. Greenberg, 'City of Refuge', in Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible.

It is of course possible that the Deuteronomist deliberately avoided the word, perhaps because it was associated with the sanctuaries against which he was campaigning. But there is nothing in its etymology to imply that the word was current before the Exile<sup>65</sup>. An apparently cognate term קלוט appears in Lev.xxii.23 as a kind of blemish in a sacrificial animal, alongside שדוץ, an almost equally rare word which seems to mean 'stretched', or possibly 'mutilated'. With the help of an Arabic cognate, meaning 'very short', קלוט is normally translated 'stunted'. The root קלט exists in Judaeo-Aramaic with the meaning 'take in, harbour', which could have been derived from the priestly usage in the phrase 'city of refuge'; though the passive participle is used in the sense 'drawn together', i.e. not cloven, of the hoof of a sacrificial animal. The fact remains that these are late developments, which throw no clear light on the use of the term in the passages before us. One may wonder if the similarity of the late and poetic root קטל = kill influenced the development of the phrase 'city of refuge for the slayer'.

There is then no evidence for the use of מקלט, or any related form, before the exile. So if, as we have argued, the Chronicler has taken the term from a text earlier than Joshua, this may represent the oldest surviving use of the word. The fact that it is here given without explanation

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65. See e.g. BDB; Koehler-Baumgartner; and for the comparatively luxuriant use of the word in post-Biblical literature, M. Jastrow, Dictionary of the Targumim etc., New York, 1950, under מקלט and קלט.

indicates that it was at the time familiar; the elaborate priestly explanations will then be re-interpretations of an older institution. We have suggested that this was also the case with Deuteronomy xix. The pattern of Jo.xx gives some further support to such a view. This is the only passage in the Bible which names the 'cities of refuge', except for Dt.iv.41ff., which seems to be derived from it, and the Levite city lists. As so often in the second half of Joshua, the actual list of cities is clearly distinct from its setting, and could well have existed before the priestly system of 'refuge cities' was devised. Within the list itself, Jo.xx.7f., there is nothing to indicate its purpose, except the verbs at the beginning of each verse. Of these, the second, 'and they gave' or 'appointed', is non-committal, and may be applied to any sort of allocation or assignment<66>. The first, וַיִּקְרָא, is more unusual, and seems to indicate that the places listed had some sacral function<67>. However, it is possible that the use of the term has been influenced by the following name, Kedesh. There is perhaps a certain tension within the idea of 'consecrating' a secular refuge-city.

It would require a separate study to investigate the original purpose of this list; it may be lost beyond recovery. But we may speculate that, in a collection of such material, it preceded the list of 'Levite cities' - as Jo.xx now precedes Jo.xxi - under the title מקלט '74<68>. At some stage,

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66. E.g. Jo.xiii.14,15,24,29; xxi.8,9,11, etc.

67. On the reading see M. David, op.cit., p.31 n.3.

68. At this stage, probably Bezer was described only as 'in

possibly when the Levite city list was divided between the tribes, a compiler was misled into combining the two, under the general title 'cities of refuge'. Presumably some, if not all, of the cities named in Jo.xx were already in the Levite list<sup>69</sup>. The editor would then feel he was removing duplications, and rationalising the order of the cities under their tribes. This amalgamated list forms the basis of Ch and Jo. But in addition, Joshua gives the list of 'cities of refuge' separately, with its own introduction and conclusion.

If this is at all like the actual course of events, it points to a time when it was not well known that the ערי מקלט were distinct from the 'cities of the Levites'. This might most readily be understood as a time when the original character of the towns in the two lists had been almost or completely forgotten. But, according to our hypothesis, it must also be some time before Jo.xxv. were composed, since Jo.xxi seems to be a further elaboration on the text as attested by Chronicles, in which the two lists had already been conflated. So we have here a somewhat fragile chain of argument, pointing towards the following conclusions:

- (i) The list of 'cities of refuge' (Jo.xx.7f.) is considerably

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the wilderness'; the correction 'on the tableland' was added later, perhaps by the compiler of Jo.xx, and taken over into Dt.iv.43.

69. Cf. the views of Wellhausen, pp.70ff. above; and Albright, Archaeology and the Religion of Israel, pp.120ff.; Noth, Josua, 2nd ed., p.127.

It is to be observed that the material incorporated into the Levite city list all comes from Jo.xx.7f., and none from the 'framework' where the character of the 'cities of refuge' is explained.

older than its context, and so presumably pre-exilic.

(ii) The original character or function of the cities had been largely or completely forgotten by the end of the monarchy, and may have been only remotely related to the structure in the Deuteronomic and Priestly codes.

We seem to have no way of telling what was the original nature of 'cities of refuge'; so this concept can make no contribution to our understanding of the 'cities of the Levites'.

#### 4. The 'pasture-lands'

It is a prominent feature of the Levite city-list that each town is allocated 'with its pasture-lands'. This recurrent phrase corresponds broadly to the formula with which each group of cities in Jo.xv ends, '(x cities) with their villages<70>'. However, the correspondence is far from perfect. In Jo.xv, the 'villages' do not come after each city, but in the formula which concludes each paragraph. In Ch, the 'pasture-lands' come after each city, but not in the one concluding formula (v.45c); nor do they figure in the summary section. And in Jo we have the same picture as in Ch, except that there is a concluding formula for each paragraph, and for the list as a whole, normally with mention of the 'pasture-lands'<71>.

Further, while it is clear enough why the 'villages' are

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70. Cf. xiii.23,28; xvi.9; xvii.11,16; xviii.23,28; xix.6ff.; xix.12,22f.,30,38f.,48. Only in xvii.11 do we find the 'villages' attached to each single town; elsewhere they come in the concluding formula of a group.

71. See above.



mentioned, the point of the 'pasture-lands' is not so obvious. The details given in Num.xxxv.2-5 are clearly 'utopian', and there is nothing in the passage that the priestly theorist could not have elaborated out of his own head on the basis of the word migrāshim. It is not a common word, except in its connection with Levite cities; and it is not attested before P and the later chapters of Ezekiel, unless Ez.xxvii.28 is to be given an earlier date<sup><72></sup>. In any case the passage is too vague and poetic to help us determine the meaning of the word. It occurs three times, however, in more definite contexts in Ezekiel's blue-print of the ideal state, indicating in one place a space fifty cubits wide around the sanctuary<sup><73></sup>, and later a 250-cubit belt around 'the city'<sup><74></sup>. This belt seems to be distinct from the agricultural land which was to produce "food for the workers of the city."<sup><75></sup> There is no mention

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72. מִגְרָשִׁים occurs in a general, non-technical sense in 1 Chr. v.16, describing the region of Sharon, and in Ez.xxvii.28, in the poetic lament over Tyre. In neither case does the context give us any help in determining its precise meaning. It appears three times in Ezekiel's plan of the future Israel, xlv.2; xlviii.15,17. Elsewhere in the Bible it is used only, and regularly, of the Levite cities, of which it is a sort of 'trade mark': Lev.xxv.34; Num.xxxv.2ff.(x5); Jo.xiv.4; xxi (passim); 1 Chr.vi.40ff. (passim); xiii.2; 2 Chr.xi.14; xxxi.19. The root מִגְרָשׁ is not uncommon, in the sense 'drive out', and BDB and Koehler-Baumgartner have no hesitation in translating מִגְרָשִׁים as 'a place where cattle are driven out (to graze)', 'pasture-ground'. The latter refers to an Arabic cognate, meaning 'send beasts to pasture'. In later Hebrew literature the noun appears occasionally in a sense derived from that in Jo and Ch; the verb is again comparatively frequent, usually meaning 'divorce', and more rarely 'stir up, set in commotion' (with which cf. Amos viii.8; Is.lvii.20). See M. Jastrow, Dictionary of the Talmud etc., New York, 1950.

73. Ez.xlv.2

74. xlviii.15,17

75. V.18 (RSV)

of pasturing animals here; that would be quite inappropriate in the shadow of the sanctuary, and there would scarcely be room for a flock even in the somewhat broader space around the city. It would appear that in the one case the idea was simply to preserve and demonstrate the 'holiness' and separateness of the sanctuary; and presumably the intention was much the same, on a larger scale, in connection with the city. The priestly writer, on the other hand, states explicitly in a number of places that the migrāshîm of the Levite cities were to support sheep and cattle, and give the inhabitants a livelihood; though the area provided, a belt of a quarter of a mile or so around each town, seems inadequate for this purpose<sup><76></sup>. There is however another strand in which the Levites' income is derived from the tithes and offerings<sup><77></sup>. Perhaps the two can be reconciled in some degree: the Levites were not to be herdsmen, in the normal, profit-making sense, but were to have a sort of extended larder or store-house where they could keep their fresh meat on the hoof, or such part of their wealth as was in the form of live-stock. They did not need fields; grain could be stored in warehouses in the city. but it is doubtful whether this compromise does justice either to Ezekiel's vision or to the Priestly concept of the migrāshîm.

The other obviously helpful passage is Jo.xxi.11f. with its parallel, 1 Chr.vi.40f. Here it is explained that Hebron was allocated to the Levites, together with its pasture-lands,

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76. Num.xxxv.3f. Cf. Jo.xiv.3; xxi.2f.

77. Num.xviii.24; Jo.xiii.14

but the surrounding and normally dependent countryside and villages remained in the hands of Caleb, to whom they had been given earlier in return for services rendered<sup><78></sup>. Here we have a clear distinction between Levite migrash, under the walls of the city, and the farmland further afield; and it has been common to apply the same distinction, in principle, to all the other places in the list. The Levites took the city and its immediate surroundings; the tribe from whose territory it was taken retained the 'villages and fields'. We can be confident that the compiler of Jo.xxi intended us to understand it in this way; and perhaps such a division of town and countryside would not be completely unworkable, especially if the Levites were in fact a minority element in their cities. But can we follow him? Some scholars would omit Hebron altogether from the list of Levite cities<sup><79></sup>. This would eliminate at a stroke the one passage where migrash and 'fields and villages' appear contrasted side by side. But even if we do not wish to take this step, there are other remarkable features in the passage that we must ponder. First, it is isolated. Another account of the allocation of Hebron to the Levites follows at once, with never a back-reference. This must indicate, as we have argued above, that the pericope has been prefixed to the city-list by an editorial hand. And second, the story is in itself unsatisfactory. What Joshua gave to Caleb was Hebron - not even Hebron 'and its villages'. "So Hebron became the inheritance of Caleb ...

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78. Jo.xiv.6ff.

79. E.g. Albright: see below, pp.153,157f.

to this day!"<sup><80></sup> Jo.xxi.11f. is a compromise, which does not succeed in securing for Caleb his rights. (There is no suggestion, surprisingly enough, that Caleb gave the city to the Levites; cf. xxi,3). Can we be sure that it does justice to the character of a Levite city? Or is it not more likely to be an attempt to explain away an apparent contradiction, which only arose out of a misunderstanding of the true state of affairs? The pericope would then not only have no organic relation to the city list, but would also be in itself mistaken. We can certainly not use it as firm evidence of the original nature of a Levite city and its surroundings.

The emphasis on the migrāshim<sup>80</sup> in the Joshua version of the list is remarkable. The Chronicler limits himself to attaching them to nearly all the cities. In Joshua xxi they also appear repeatedly in the introductory and concluding paragraphs<sup><81></sup>; indeed, v.42 has been added specially to ensure that we do not overlook the point, already made ad nauseam and clinched in the preceding summary verse, that each and every city had its meadow. It must have been an issue very dear to the heart of an editor. Indeed, one can scarcely avoid the conclusion that it must have been deeply embedded in the tradition. But, astonishingly, there is no mention of it in the summary paragraph, Jo.4-7<sup><82></sup>, nor in the corresponding passage, Ch.46-48. There is no reason of style or substance why the pasture-lands should not have been noted

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80. Jo.xiv.14

81. Vv.2f.,41f.

82. V.8 resumes 'cities and pasture-lands' from v.3

in these verses. Indeed, as we have seen, it is precisely in such number-formulae that we find mention of the 'villages' attached to the cities allocated to other tribes<sup><83></sup>. It seems, then, that this emphasis on meadows does not run right through the material. We must suppose that the term was originally of such legal importance that it had to appear repeatedly in the definitive statement of the Levite cities, but that it was not of such general interest as to feature in a summary. Indeed, if the list is pre-monarchic, the precise meaning of migrash may have been forgotten by the time the summary was made. Subsequently, however, the word gained new vigour and significance, perhaps as a plank in a political platform<sup><84></sup>. In addition to the obvious enthusiasm of the editor of Jo, of which we have been speaking, there is the evidence of the sudden blossoming of the word in Ezekiel and P.

We might suppose that the author of the later chapters of Ezekiel took a colourless word for 'space', 'clearing', to indicate the cleared area around his sanctuary and city. His choice of words may well have been influenced by the list of Levite cities; but if that list is ancient, any technical sense migrash may originally have carried would have been long forgotten. However, somebody soon saw both a practical use

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83. E.g. Jo.xv.32,36,41

84. The alternative is that migrash is wholly a late term. If so, then either the list of Levite cities is a late document, or the 'pasture-lands' have been conscientiously inserted, city by city, by an editor. Of these possibilities, the latter is unparalleled and improbable, and the former offers no answer to the questions posed by the geographical distribution of the listed cities.

for the 'green belts', and a way of getting round the well-rooted idea that 'Levi had no inheritance', i.e. the Levites had no right to real property. So arose the detailed prescriptions of Num.xxxv and Lev.xxv, and (in part) the misguided attempt to explain away the double allocation of Hebron.- This hypothesis cannot be proved, but seems sufficiently reasonable to prevent us using the pasture-lands as a basis for arguments about the original nature of the Levite cities.

##### 5. The eastern cities

The evidence for the names of the towns in the Levite city lists is best handled in tabular form, and will be found (as far as the principal Greek and Hebrew manuscript traditions are concerned) in the appendix. It will be observed that there is a far higher agreement between the Hebrew texts over the Levite cities east of the Jordan than elsewhere. There are in fact only three discrepancies worthy of mention, which happen to be of different types. The first two concern the Levite cities of eastern Manasseh, Jo.27 and Ch.56. The 'city of refuge' there is variously spelt גולן (Jo, cf. Jo.xx,9) and גולן (Ch, cf. Dt.iv,43). However, in the two passages from Joshua the word is pointed to be read 'Golan', as in Ch, and there can be little doubt that the same place is intended. The other of these Manassite cities is in Jo בַּעַשְׂתָּרָה, in Ch עַשְׂתָּרוֹת. The initial letter in Jo's version is commonly held to be an abbreviation of 'Beth' <85>; Albright sees the

taw as lost by dissimilation, in view of its recurrence in the following word. The ending he regards as assimilated to the preceding and following words<86>. Whatever view we take of these details, it is clear enough that the same place is intended in both texts; the divergences are very modest, compared with those elsewhere in the lists. Thirdly, the whole group of Levite cities in Reuben is totally omitted from some of the best MSS of Joshua. This is almost certainly an accident of transmission, the first word of v.36 being the same as the opening of v.38. There were at any rate four Reubenite cities in the list at the time the summary was made (cf. Jo.7). Further, the LXX gives just such a text as we should expect: "And beyond the Jordan at Jericho, from the tribe of Reuben, the city of refuge of the slayer, Bosor in the wilderness of Misor and its pasture-lands" etc. This reproduces the corresponding text in Ch, with the usual addition of "the city of refuge for the slayer" (cf. Jo.27,32,38)<87>. It is difficult to see how this could have arisen, if not by the same processes as produced the other verses about refuge

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85. E.g. BDB, sub voc.; Albright, 'The List of Levitical Cities', p.69 n.pp.

86. Ibid.

87. The LXX is not consistent in its rendering of this phrase.

The variants are:

v.13: τὴν πόλιν φυγαδευτήριον τῷ φονεύσαντι

v.21: τὴν πόλιν τοῦ φυγαδευτηρίου τὴν τοῦ φονεύσαντος

(B; A: φονευόντος)

v.27: τὰς πόλεις τὰς ἀφωρισμένας τοῖς φονεύσανσι

v.32: τὴν πόλιν τὴν ἀφωρισμένην τῷ φονεύσαντι

vv.36,38: τὴν πόλιν τὸ φυγαδευτήριον τοῦ φονεύσαντος (B; for τὸ φυγαδευτήριον A has τοῦ φυγαδευτηρίου in v.38 only)

Cf. Ch.42,52: τὰς πόλεις τῶν φυγαδευτηρίων.

It is difficult to attach any significance to the use of the plural in Jo.27.

cities, discussed above. This must then be the original text of Jo. Once it had been lost, the gap in the city list seems to have been made good in the simplest possible way, either from an 'archive' version of the list which had not been combined with the 'refuge city' material, or from Ch. In the latter case, we should have to suppose that the editor discarded the references to the Jordan and Jericho as inappropriate (which indeed they are). He would not perhaps have regarded himself as mending the text (from a more complete version), but as noting some additional facts in the margin; he would thus feel free to make his note in his own words, in a concise form.

The suggestion that this sub-paragraph may be derived from Ch receives some support from a curious feature of LXX. From Jo.13 to 33, the phrase regularly used for 'its pasture-lands' is τὰ ἀφωρισμένα αὐτῇ; in vv.34-42, however, the expression is τὰ περιπόρια αὐτῆς, as regularly in Ch. It is however difficult to draw any firm conclusions from this change of usage, since περιπόρια is the word employed in Jo.1-12. There is perhaps some indication that the last part of the list may have been translated or revised with reference to a version of Ch<88>.

The group of Reubenite cities shows a further peculiarity. Apart from Bezer, all the cities appear consecutively in the account of Reuben's tribal inheritance, Jo.xiii.18. Similarly,

88. See Holmes, Joshua, p.72.



all the Levite cities of Gad, except for Golan the 'city of refuge', are to be found in the description of that tribe's territory, Jo,xiii,25f. They are in reverse order and separated by other names; but it could be argued that Mahanaim, Heshbon and Jazer were the most prominent names in the list, and were thus reasonable candidates for selection<89>. And Ashtaroth<90>, which with Golan the refuge-city makes eastern Manasseh's contribution to the Levites, is the better known of the only two towns named in Jo,xiii,29-31, where the half tribe's possession is described. Noth takes this as evidence that the 'cities of refuge' are secondary additions to the Levite city list<91>. However, they might equally be the basis on which this part of the list was constructed.

The close agreement between Jo and Ch over the Levite cities of Reuben and Gad, and, with the qualifications we have noted, eastern Manasseh, contrasts sharply with the divergences over the other tribes late in the list, Naphtali and Zebulun. Nowhere else do the lists show such sustained unanimity. We must conclude that this part of the list has had a comparatively short and simple history; which means that it originated at

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89. The account of Reuben's territory in Jo,xiii includes a substantial city list; the compiler of the Levite list could simply pick a group from the middle. The description of Gad's possession, Jo,xiii,24ff., consists mostly of a statement of the boundary, and our compiler might feel that the technique he had employed before was not appropriate here.

90. Ch.56; Beeshterah in Jo.27 (see above).

91. Noth, Josua, 2nd ed., p.127. See below, p.164, for a possibly similar situation in Naphtali.

a late stage in the development of the tradition. We are encouraged in this view when we see how easily the Reubenite section might have been compiled by a scribe, adding to the 'city of refuge' three names from the tribal city list; and a similar procedure would supply the entries for Gad and eastern Manasseh. Nor is the motive far to seek; the author was concerned to complete the number of twelve tribes, with a suitable quota of cities from each. We shall see below how some of the other sections seem to have been expanded, no doubt at the same time.

But for the moment we may draw this one conclusion. If it is so much as a serious possibility, that the eastern part of the Levite city list may be a late fabrication, we must avoid using it as a basis for arguments about the original form and purpose of the list. On the other hand, we should not allow this possibility to prejudice our examination of the other parts of the texts.

#### 6. The division into tribes

Noth<sup>92</sup> observes that the sequence of the tribes in Jo and Ch does not correspond to the traditional order elsewhere in the Bible, or any of its normal variations; so he infers that it was not a primary feature of the document, but that the tribal names were imposed on a previously existing list of towns. This list would be arranged in geographical areas,

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92. Josua, 2nd ed., p.127; cf. Hertzberg, Die Bücher Josua, Richter, Ruth, 1953, p.118.

starting from the south, working northwards, and finishing with the regions east of the Jordan (if indeed they were originally included at all). Albright<sup><93></sup>, on the other hand, makes his reconstruction of the Levite city list on the assumption that from the start it was designed to give four cities from each tribe.

Of the two versions of the list, that in Jo does indeed add up to 48 towns from the twelve tribes; and it is arguable that the list in Ch is shorter only because of accidental omissions. However, even Jo does not yield exactly four cities a tribe. Nine come jointly from Judah and Simeon, three from Naphtali. As we have seen, the 'cities of refuge' were clearly the subject of editorial activity at some stage, and Albright concludes that Hebron and Shechem were first added to the list at that time. Hebron, then, is the 'supernumerary' city of Judah and Simeon. Shechem, in Albright's opinion, would be in a similar position, were it not that both Jo and Ch have accidentally lost one of the other Ephraimite cities. Where Jo reads "Kibzaim," Ch has "Jokmeam"<sup><94></sup>. Both these names belong in the list, he believes; because of their similarity, one was accidentally lost from each version. In the same way, he holds that both Jo's "Hammoth-dor" and Ch's "Hammon" should figure in the list under Naphtali, restoring the tribe's total of Levite cities to four<sup><95></sup>.

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93. 'The List of Levitical Cities', pp.49ff.

94. Jo.22; Ch.53

95. Jo.32; Ch.61. Albright, op.cit., pp.52f.

In addition to these numerical arguments for regarding Hebron and Shechem as additions to the list, Albright (like Noth) refers to the mistaken attribution of Shechem to Ephraim. If this is really such an error as he supposes, it presumably arose from the description of Shechem in Jo.xx,7 as being "on Mt. Ephraim" - a phrase taken over by the redactor into Jo.xxi,21, along with the city name. We may also observe that the place seems to be out of geographical order. The list jumps from Benjamin north to Shechem, then returns to the extreme south-west of Ephraim, before leaping north again to the Jezreel area. One would imagine that such mistakes could only be made at a time when the tribal geography was no longer familiar<sup>96</sup>.

But are these such grave errors? As far as the second point is concerned, it may not have been so illogical to finish listing the Levite cities of the central hill country - Benjamin and Mt. Ephraim - before turning to the lower-lying region of western Dan. Besides, the geographical arrangement of the list is not always easy to follow; it is difficult to see why the Levite cities of Asher, for instance, should be given in the order of Jo.30f. It is also less clear than Albright would have us believe, that Shechem actually lay within Manasseh<sup>97</sup>. Jo.xvii,7ff. appears to draw the tribal boundary to the south of the town; otherwise, surprisingly, it is not

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96. Cf. also Alt, 'Bemerkungen zu einigen juddischen Ortslisten', 1951, *K.S.* II, 1953, p.295 n.9.

97. *Op.cit.*, p.53: "Shechem (which was actually in Manasseh, as we know from all other evidence)!"

mentioned as a city in the definitions of tribal possessions in Jo,xiiiiff. In a somewhat similar context, 1 Ch.vii.28 appears to place the city in Ephraim. However, the following verse ends the section with the words "In these dwelt the sons of Joseph the son of Israel," and Rothstein<sup>98</sup> and Rudolph<sup>99</sup> conclude that vv.28f. are to be taken as referring to the joint possessions of Ephraim and Manasseh. It is quite possible that the mention of "the borders of the Manassites," at the beginning of v.29, simply indicates a geographical area, and that there is no intention of making an Ephraimite/Manassite contrast between vv.28 and 29. There is no such ambiguity in the evidence given by the genealogical tables, which regularly show Shechem as a descendant of Manasseh<sup>100</sup>. And this finds corroboration in the story of Gideon the Abiezrite, who seems to be associated with Shechem; his clan is sharply distinguished from the Ephraimites<sup>101</sup>.

So there appears to be no Biblical support for the Levite lists' placing of Shechem within the boundaries of the tribe of Ephraim. Albright also refers to the ostraca from Samaria as showing that the city was still Manassite in the eighth century B.C.<sup>102</sup> However, it is noteworthy that the bulk of the evidence, Biblical and archaeological, is concerned with genealogies rather than geography. The ostraca give a

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98. Op.cit., p.148.

99. Op.cit., p.74

100. Num.xxvi.31; Jo,xvii.2; cf. 1 Chr.vii.19.

101. Jdg.viii.31; viii.1f.

102. Op.cit., p.53 n.9.

number of place or clan names, apparently grouped around Shechem, which can be paralleled from the genealogies of Manasseh<103>. Aharoni finds here "evidence for the existence of the ancient clan divisions that had maintained their integrity even late in the Monarchical period."<104> It is scarcely open to doubt that this area was originally settled by Manasseh, and that the old family names persisted. However, it may still be possible that the boundary of Ephraim had effectively been pushed north of Shechem even by David's time. Saul's son inherited "Gilead and the Asherites and Jezreel and Ephraim and Benjamin and all Israel."<105> Manasseh is not mentioned; it is either included in Ephraim, or possibly reduced to a modest area around Beth-shan which was under Philistine control. Under Solomon, again, the first administrative district embraced the whole of Mt. Ephraim, and included Shechem and Tirzah<106>. Other parts of what had been Manasseh were districts 3 and 4, on the coast, and 5, an L-shaped strip running from Megiddo to Beth-shan and down the Jordan valley. If these districts corresponded in general with tribal territories<107>, then Ephraim would appear to have pushed its frontier well north of Shechem by the time of the monarchy. It is consistent with this picture, that the two Levite cities from western Manasseh are Taanach and Ibleam, which lie far to the north-

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103. Abiezer, Helek, Shechem, Shemida, Noah, Hoglah, and probably Asriel. See Y. Aharoni, The Land of the Bible, Jerusalem, 1962; E.T. London, 1966, p.322ff.

104. Op.cit., p.324.

105. 2 Sam.ii.8f., as translated by Aharoni (op.cit., p.255); see below, pp.270f.

106. 1 Ki.iv.7ff.

107. Cf. ch.IV n.17.

west, in the Solomonic district 5.

So although in Gideon's time, as we have seen, Shechem was outside Ephraim, probably from the time of Saul onwards it could be called an Ephraimite city. Its inclusion in the Ephraimite section of the Levite city list need not then be the work of a late and misguided editor, but might reflect the actual state of the tribes from an early period in Israel's history. So unless we share Albright's assumption that there must originally have been four Levite cities in Ephraim, and are convinced by his argument that they included both Kibzaim and Ibleam, we have no need to doubt the place of Shechem in the list.

The case against Hebron is stronger as far as numbers are concerned, in that there is one city too many attributed to the two tribes of Judah and Simeon. Of the nine, Hebron attracts suspicion both because of its place at the head of the list, and because of its strange double entry. This is indeed peculiar. Noth<sup>108</sup> takes it as evidence that Hebron alone of the six 'cities of refuge' originally stood in the Levite city list. Albright dismisses the name as redundant: "Our textual analysis indicates that Hebron and Shechem were not in the list but were added to it (see below)"<sup>109</sup>. But although he proceeds to give a little space to Shechem, there is no further discussion of Hebron's position. It is unanimously attested by the sources, and we are offered no more reason to

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108. Noth, Josua, 2nd ed., p.127. See below, p.192.

109. Op.cit., p.52.

doubt it than any other of the 'refuge cities', some of which are essential to the scheme of four cities per tribe.

The list as it stands in Joshua is correctly summarised in Jo.4-7: 13 cities for Aaron from three tribes; 10 for the rest of Kohath from two and a half tribes; 13 for Gershon from three and a half tribes; and 12 for Merari from three tribes. Ch.45-8 gives the same figures, although its actual list of city names is shorter. The numbers certainly approximate to four cities a tribe, and, like the numerical summaries throughout Jo's list, emphasize the relation between each tribe and its contribution of cities - four from this tribe, four from that, three from another. These would offer proof of a carefully planned system. But Albright dismisses them: "The summations are late and worthless for our purpose, as proved conclusively by comparison of Joshua with Chronicles<sup>110</sup>". So the only acceptable evidence of the original form of the list is the city names themselves. And as Albright seems to favour the priority of Ch, when he discards the numerical embellishments of Jo "by comparison", we should perhaps see if the shorter list is defensible, or if it has arisen through accidental omissions.

Seven of the cities in Jo have no parallel in Ch; and if Albright is right, there are two more, Kibzaim in Ephraim and Hammath-dor in Naphtali. In these cases, however, it is at least arguable that Ch's Jokmeam<sup>111</sup> and Hammon<sup>112</sup> are

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110. Loc.cit.

111. See Albright, 'List of Levitical Cities', p.67 n.aa.



variant versions of the same names. The seven are: Juttah in Judah, Gibeon in Benjamin, Eltekeh and Gibbethon in Dan, and Jokneam, Kartah and Nahalal in Zebulun. On the other side, there is nothing in Jo resembling Ch's Tabor in Zebulun.

For the first, Juttah, there is solid support in the MT of Jo, but not elsewhere. LXX A has no corresponding name in Jo or Ch. LXX B of Jo reads τρυς, which might represent a misreading of הט' as הט but is more easily derived from the preceding sequence הט' - ח(נ)<113>. Such an origin comes even more readily to mind for the ατρυς of Ch's LXX B; it may however be related to the חט of MT (Ch). It would therefore appear rash to claim Septuagint support for Juttah; though it is difficult to explain how the name got into Jo, if it does not belong in the list<114>.

Gibeon is almost identical in form with the following name, Geba, and the texts give us no indication whether it is

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112. Albright, *op.cit.*, p.71 n., observes that both the A and B streams of the Greek text of Joshua preserve two names here, one recognisable as Hammath(-dor) (νερμωθ, μααθδωρ) and the other as Hammon (θερμων, ρομμων). On this basis he has no hesitation in declaring that both names originally stood in Jo. The main difference however seems to be in the ending, in -θ or in -ν (corresponding to the Hebrew, חמח and חמון); and the same variation appears in the two LXX versions of Hammon in Ch, χαμωθ and χαμων. It can not be ruled out that the forms may represent different place names; but is it not equally possible, and more probable, that one of the two endings (ח- and ון-) is a scribal corruption of the other? The witness of the Septuagint to both forms, in Ch as well as Jo, shows that the variants were current before the translation was made.

113. For the disappearance of ח in transliteration, cf. εκνομ for קנע (Jo.34), εζερ for ער (Jo.39), τρυς for חט (Jo.25).

114. The only other place where the name is found is Jo.xv.55.

omitted from Ch by haplography or inserted in Jo by dittography. The former is perhaps the more likely. The Greek versions show that the Hebrew texts were in their present state before the translations were made. This is true also in the case of Elteke and Gibbethon, which are not found in the Hebrew or the Greek texts of Ch. We suggested above that they might have been omitted by accident, along with the tribal name Dan. But at the same time we mentioned reasons why Dan might have been left out deliberately. When we look more closely at the towns, we notice two points of interest. First, they bear some general resemblance to the following pair. And second, they appear consecutively and in the same order in Jo.xix.44, mid-way between Aijalon (v.42) and Gath-rimmon (v.45). We are thus presented with two separate and complementary reasons why an editor, anxious to build up the two Danite cities of Ch into a full tribal complement of four, might pick these particular ones. One may also observe that these two are at the extreme western end of the central belt of Levite cities, in territory not under Israelite control for long. Indeed, perhaps the most probable reason of all, why Dan is not mentioned in Ch, is that this tribe had held no territory in western Palestine since the period of the Judges. So there is a case that these cities may be additions to the list, to complete the numerical scheme of Jo.

The records of the Levite cities of Zebulun are the most confused part of the whole list. The MT of Jo offers Jokneam, Kartah, Dimnah and Nahalal, and is followed fairly closely by

LXX A<115>. LXX B follows at a greater distance, with μννν<116>, κνδης<117>, no representative of Dimnah, and lastly σελλα<118>. The only one of all these to have a parallel in the MT of Ch is Dimnah. Ch reads Rimmono, 7 and 7 having been confused. Of the two, Rimmono (or perhaps Rimmon) is more likely to be the original reading. There is no mention of Dimnah anywhere else in the Bible; Rimmon is a natural place name, used of sites in Judah and Benjamin, and appearing also in the boundary list of Zebulun<119>. The only other 'Levite city' of this tribe, according to Ch, is Tabor, which bears no resemblance to any of the names in Jo. LXX B is fairly close to the MT, offering ρεμμων for Rimmono and θαρχελα for Tabor. This last could just conceivably be a variant of Nahalal, which follows Dimnah in Jo. We have seen a surprising interchange of λ and π, ν and θ, in the case of Hammath/Hammon<120>; υ is frequently unrepresented in Greek<121>, and the π here may perhaps have evaporated in the same way; the double χ may be a misreading of a repeated λ<122>, and the ending might arise from dittography of the

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115. For the second name, LXX A reads καποα in mistake for καποα.

116. Presumably the first two letters were at some stage mistaken for the preposition εκ. Other Greek texts have (ι)εκννμ.

117. 7 seems to have been misread as 7, and the whole word confused with Kedesh (v.32).

118. Apparently misreading π as υ. For alternative explanations see Albright, op.cit., p.72 n.υ.

119. See Jo.xv.32 (place in Judah); 1 Chr.iv.32 (place in Simeon); Jdg.xx.45,47; xxi.13 (place in Benjamin); Jo.xix.13 (place on boundary of Zebulun); cf. 2 Sam.iv.2,5,9 (personal name in Benjamin); 2 Ki.v.18 (name of Syrian god).

120. Jo.32; Ch.61; MT and LXX.

121. See n.42 above.

122. In majuscule, λλλ misread as λλλ (note the double λ in

following καί. This is highly speculative, but without some such link this LXX reading is isolated and inexplicable. LXX A here reads θαβωρ, but for the rest of the Zebulun group of Levite cities it abandons the MT of Ch and seems to follow LXX B of Jo. Like the latter, it omits Rimmono/Dimnah altogether, and reads καδης for Kartah (Jo.34, MT); Jo's 'Jokneam' (MT) it represents with εκομαν (cf. Jo LXX B: μαν).

We appear then to have here two distinct lines of tradition, represented by the MT of Jo and of Ch, with the LXX A of Ch offering a partial conflation<123>. The only point of contact between the two is in the relation of Dimnah to Rimmono. We must now examine the other contents of the two streams, and see if any conclusions can be drawn about their history.

The first town in Jo.34, Jokneam, appears in Jo.xix.11 as a reference point for the boundary of Zebulun. It would appear, indeed, to be the other side of the border; we are here following it westward to "the brook which is east of Jokneam." But little weight can be placed on such an indication. Nor is it significant that the town does not figure in the list of cities of Zebulun, Jo.xix.15, which is obviously incomplete. The only other place where the name is to be found is in the list of Joshua's conquests, Jo.xii.22f.: "The king of Kedesh, one; the king of Jokneam in Carmel, one; the king of Dor in Naphath-dor, one." This passage is interesting both in its confirmation of the existence of a city of Jokneam

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LXX B of Jo, σελλα).  
123. It is very strange that this text omits Dimnah/Rimmono.

in the Carmel area, and for associating it with a Kedesh. The name which follows Jokneam in Jo.34, Kartah, is suspect both because it is found nowhere else, and because of its resemblance to Kartan in v.32. As we have seen, LXX B (supported by LXX A of Ch) here reads Kedesh, a word not unlike Kartah in Hebrew script. However, Kedesh has already appeared in both Jo and Ch, in its proper place in Naphtali (v.32). A further point of interest in Jo.xii.22f. is the appearance of Naphath-dor<sup>124</sup> after Jokneam. This is reminiscent of Hammoth-dor, attributed to Naphtali in Jo.32. As Hammoth-dor is unknown elsewhere, and the Dor region is well to the south-west of Naphtali, it has been proposed to omit 'Dor' from the text, leaving 'Hammath', which is listed in Jo,xix.35 as a city of Naphtali. There is however no easy explanation how the 'Dor' should have got into the text, if it does not belong there; and if, with Albright, we take this place as separate from Ch's 'Hammon', there is no good textual ground for the emendation. If then for the time being we let the MT of Jo stand, we have in vv.32-4 the sequence Kedesh, Hammoth-dor, Kartan, Jokneam, Kartah; and if we take both Kartan and Kartah, which are hapax legomena<sup>125</sup>, as variants of Kedesh, we are left with the same sort of group as we found in Jo.xii.22f., viz. Kedesh, Jokneam and a place in Dor. Such a reconstruction would reduce the Levite cities of Naphtali and Zebulun to two

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124. נפת דור; cf. 1 Ki.iv.11 נפת דאד, Solomon's fourth administrative district.

125. There is little support for 'Kartan' in LXX. Albright asserts that it is a form of the Phoenician 'Qarten', which corresponds in meaning to the Hebrew 'Kiriathaim' of Ch.61 (op.cit., p.72 n.<sup>2</sup>).

each, in Jo; and it would cut across the pattern of tribal boundaries, since it is scarcely possible to ascribe a town in Dor to Naphtali<126>.

At this point we might perhaps digress from our inquiry into the Levite cities of Zebulun, to see what happens to Naphtali's list if we do accept the excision of Dor. Hammath, we observed, occurs in the list of this tribe's cities in Jo.xix,35, and it is followed at once by Rakkath. Noth has suggested that this name is a variant of Kartan, the first two letters being transposed, and the ending modified<127>. The list of Levite cities in Naphtali (Jo,32) would then comprise a 'city of refuge' and a couple of others taken from the tribal list - the same type of artificial construction as we found in the Levite lists for eastern Manasseh, Reuben and, less obviously, Gad. However, the text of Jo.xix,35 is uncertain; in particular, whereas the names of towns are regularly linked by 'and', there is no 'and' between Hammath and Rakkath. One is tempted to speculate that if, by haplography, a ד had been omitted before the initial ק of 'Rakkath', we should have 'Hammath-dor' and a following name חפ. This might account for the intrusion of 'Dor' in Jo.xxi,32, at the expense of making it difficult to derive the following word from ch.xix,35<128>.

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126. See below for further examples of misplaced tribal boundaries.

127. Josua, 2nd ed., p.127.

128. It is perhaps conceivable that חפ is given here in error for חפד, on which see below.

Returning to the Levite cities of Zebulun, we come to the last one in Jo.35, Nahalal. Of the four, this is the only one to have a place in the short list of cities belonging to the tribe, Jo.xix.15, where it immediately follows Kattath (קטת). Its third and final appearance in the Bible is in Jdg.i.30, where it is linked with Kitron (קטרון) as a city that Zebulun was unable to occupy. Neither Kitron nor Kattath are found elsewhere, and they are commonly equated<sup>129</sup>. One may wonder whether the Kartah (קרתה) of Jo.34 might not be a further variant, the form being influenced by Kartan in v.32. If this were so, we should again have before us a group of towns, Jokneam, Kartah/Kattath, Dimnah/Rimmono, and Nahalal, all to be found in the account of the tribal territory earlier in Joshua, where indeed two of them appear consecutively<sup>130</sup>. The situation is however different from that in the Levite city lists of Reuben, Gad, and possibly Naphtali. Not only is there no 'city of refuge' to head the list; more significantly, the names which occur consecutively in Jo.xix are in xxi separated. Indeed, they are divided by the one name which also appears in Ch. It is therefore not altogether easy to conceive an editor, with Rimmon and possibly Jokneam in his source, making the number of Zebulun's Levite cities up to four with these names from Jo.xix. One would expect such additions either to precede or to follow the basic stock, and not to straddle it.

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129. Aharoni has no hesitation about their equivalence (Land of the Bible, p.212); cf.BDB.

130. Jo.xix.15.

Finally, what of the 'parallel' list for Zebulun in Ch.62? On Rimmono we have nothing to add to what has been said above. We are left with Tabor, which bears no resemblance to any of the names in the MT or LXX of Jo<131>. Chisloth-tabor, 'the flanks of Tabor', is mentioned in the boundary list of Zebulun (Jo,xix,12), but Chesulloth and Tabor appear as separate places within or on the boundary of Issachar in xix,18 and 22. Albright would accordingly emend v.12 to read כסלת ותבור, asserting that both Chesulloth and Mt. Tabor were "definitely in Issachar"<132>. This may be the reason why Tabor was omitted from the more carefully organised list in Jo.

For, if we have any conclusion at all to draw from this part of our study, it is that the list of Levite cities in Joshua shows signs of editing and adaptation to fit into the tribal pattern. Ch does not fit this pattern so well. The numbers of named cities are in several cases less than the four per tribe which is the norm in Jo; and of the places listed, some seem to be under the wrong tribal heading. Shechem and Tabor have already been mentioned. No Kedesh is elsewhere known in Issachar (Ch,57), Hammon is listed in Jo,xix,28 under Asher (cf. Ch,61, Naphtali), and the following name, Kiriathaim, is in other passages connected with Reuben<133>. Some of these may indicate no more than gaps in our information; Kedesh and Kiriathaim are natural names that could be applied

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131. See above, pp.161f., on the remarkable reading of LXX

B, Θρυγαία.

132. 'List of Levitical Cities', pp.72f., n. ת.

133. Num,xxxii,37; Jo,xiii,19.



to several different places. But there remain some that seem to be the wrong side of a border. It is as though the list had originally been drawn up not on tribal lines, but, as Noth suggested, in broader geographical regions; and when it was carved up between the tribes, it was not possible to get all the towns in an area under the right headings, without a more thorough reorganisation than the editor was prepared at first to attempt.

We suggest, then, that a somewhat shorter list of 'Levite cities' was first divided between the tribes, and that subsequently it was filled out to give on average four cities from each of them. This view is not without difficulties. The summary section in Ch relates to the fully developed scheme, as it is now presented in Jo. We have argued that the first compiler of Ch took this summary from his source, and appended it to his list of Aaronite cities; and that the Kohathite, Gershonite and Merarite sections were added later. It would seem to follow that the fully developed version of the list was already in existence; and we should expect any compiler to follow the same version of his source material throughout. Can the list in Ch be anything other than a degenerate version of the list in Jo?

At each stage of our investigation up to the present we have been driven to concede a certain priority to Ch over Jo, except in the summary section. This priority appears most conspicuously in the framework of the clan lists, the descriptions of the 'refuge cities', the omission of numbers, and the use

of the term 'family'. It is also to be seen to some extent in the city names. Here we have to speak with caution, since the texts of Jo and Ch are more than likely to be corrupt in places, and our knowledge of the geography of early Israel is sadly incomplete. However, whereas it has usually been possible to suggest how or why a fuller part of Jo's list was built up from a shorter one in Ch, the reverse progress, from Ch to Jo, would be more difficult to explain. The close agreement in the summary section and in the latter part of the list indicates careful and accurate transmission; it is therefore difficult to account for many of the gaps in Ch as due to scribal carelessness in the history of the tradition since the publication of the book of Joshua. So we must suppose that the compilers of Ch had at their disposal both an earlier and a later version of the list; and that in general they adhered to the earlier one, although they were prepared to supplement it with new material from the fuller source<sup>134</sup>.

#### 7. The development of the Levite city list

By way of conclusion to this chapter, let us attempt to set out the stages through which we may suppose the list to have passed. Any such scheme must be tentative and liable to revision in detail, but in the light of what we have discovered, the main outline must be somewhat as follows:

- (i) The plain list of town names was drawn up. It may have

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134. It is of course possible that in some places the early list was harmonised with the later; but we have no means of telling where this has happened.

been specified from the start that 'pasture-lands' went with each city. The list included towns in southern, central and northern Palestine, but probably did not extend east of the Jordan; and some other areas, such as the extreme west, and the regions of Naphtali and Zebulun (then at the bottom of the list) were more thinly represented than at present.

(ii) The list was divided between the three Levite clans and the Aaronites, and between the tribes; entries were made up for the eastern tribes, with the help of the 'cities of refuge' <135>. There is no way of telling whether this was done in one step or more; and if the latter, which came first.

(iii) The list was augmented where necessary to give four cities from each tribe, on average. There would not seem to be enough time for a perfectly symmetrical list to degenerate in the way Albright suggests, so we must suppose that there always were variations from the norm of four cities a tribe.

(iv) The numerical framework was elaborated, with its emphasis on the Levite clan structure; and the numerical summary was drawn up.

(v) A writer of Aaronite interests combined the first part of the city-list (ii) with the latter three-quarters of the summary, producing the first part of the source of Ch.

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135. The Merarite section must at this stage have included Rimmon and Tabor from Zebulun, and the 'refuge cities' Bezer and Ramoth, where Ch differs from the more developed text in Jo.

(vi) To (v) was added the rest of the city-list (ii), supplemented from (iii) in its two final sections, where it was conspicuously deficient. This completed the source of Ch.

(vii) Final additions were made to (iv), with further emphasis on the 'pasture-lands', to produce the text of Jo.

Since the Levite clan names do not appear to have come into use until after the exile, stages (ii)-(vii), if not also (i), must have taken place in the comparatively short period between Nehemiah and the completion of the book of Joshua.

#### IV THE CITIES IN HISTORY AND TRADITION

Having pursued the growth of the text as far as we can, we must now turn to seek the meaning of the Levite city lists. As a first step, it will be helpful if we can decide on their date. This must depend largely on what place, if any, we can find for the cities in Israelite history; which in its turn is governed by our view of the nature of the institution itself. Starting however from the study of the texts themselves, on which we have so far been concentrating, there are three approaches to the date of the Levite city list. The first takes the listed towns one by one, and scans the Biblical and other sources that bear on their history. The second lies in the study of the present framework and setting of the list as a whole, and in what can be discerned of its growth and development. And the third is to be sought in comparisons with other city lists, such as those of Jo,xiii-xix.

These approaches correspond broadly to three methods of Old Testament study which have been developed since Wellhausen's time. The first leans heavily upon the findings of modern archaeology, whose bearing on the Levite cities will be shown in section 1 below. The second and third are the fields of traditio-historical investigation and of form criticism. The boundaries which divide these two from each other and from literary analysis, as practised by the school of Wellhausen, are not clearly defined. The literary critic seeks the reason

for discrepancies in the Biblical texts in the hypothesis that the present books have been built up from pieces of earlier works of various authorship, with no thorough attempt to assimilate the details of the material. He sees his task as being to define the pieces; to discern which ones belong together on grounds primarily of literary style but also of historical and theological outlook; and having fitted them together, as far as may be, into the hypothetical works from which they may be supposed to have been taken, to draw conclusions about their circumstances and date, and the purpose for which they may have been written. Being based on substantial corpora of text, these conclusions may be more certain and wider in their scope and interest than the inferences that could be drawn from isolated pericopae.

This method has given valuable results in the narrative parts of the Old Testament. It is however less well adapted to dealing with the legal sections, which tend to resolve into short independent groups. It is in such material that Alt<sup>1</sup> and von Rad<sup>2</sup> have developed and refined the form-critical principles first exploited by Gunkel<sup>3</sup> and later Mowinckel<sup>4</sup>

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1. Notably in Die Ursprünge des israelitischen Rechts, 1934; E.T. 'The Origins of Israelite Law', in Essays on Old Testament History and Religion, Oxford, 1966, pp.81-132
  2. E.g. G. von Rad, 'Das Formgeschichtliche Problem des Hexateuch', 1938; E.T. in The Problem of the Hexateuch, London, 1966, pp. 1-78; Deuteronomium-studien, Göttingen, 1948; E.T. London, 1953
  3. H. Gunkel, Genesis, Göttingen, 1901; 3rd ed. 1910; Die Psalmen, Göttingen, 1926; art. 'Psalmen' in RGK, 2nd ed., vol. IV, 1930, cols. 1609-1627
  4. Psalmenstudien I-VI, Kristiania, 1921-1924

in connection especially with the Psalms. Here the main criterion both for distinguishing pericopae from their context, and for classifying them in groups, is the pattern in which they are expressed and the purpose they are intended to serve. The 'pattern' may be a particular sentence structure<sup><5></sup> or a repeated introductory or concluding formula. Whereas, broadly speaking, literary study aims to analyse texts on the basis of consistency of vocabulary and content, the motive of form-criticism is to enhance the understanding of each passage by recognising its form and discovering its 'Sitz im Leben' - the type of occasion in cult, administration of justice, or daily life for which it was intended, and the purpose it was to serve.

Alongside the development of form-criticism has arisen a disenchantment with the rigorous application of literary criticism. This came partly from the endless disagreements in detail between its practitioners, and from a feeling that they allowed too little scope for the creative activity of the compilers of the material, but principally from a sense that the ancient authors' intentions had not been properly understood, and that modern attitudes to literature had been foisted upon them. A strong emphasis is placed on oral tradition - sometimes to the almost complete exclusion of literary analysis<sup><6></sup> - and

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5. E.g. the distinction between Alt's 'casuistic' and 'apodeictic' forms.
  6. H. S. Nyberg, Studien zum Hoseabuche, 1935; H. Birkeland, Zum hebräischen Traditionswesen, Oslo, 1938; I. Engnell, Gamla Testamentet I, 1945; E. Nielsen, Oral Tradition, London, 1954

the task of the critic is regarded not as distinguishing and piecing together the paragraphs of earlier books, but as analysing the adaptations and re-applications through which units of tradition passed, in oral or written form, before they were crystallised in our present text. This discipline is difficult to distinguish sharply from form-criticism; Noth seemed to regard himself primarily as a traditio-historian<sup><7></sup>, but his first major book<sup><8></sup> was based on a form-critical study of the lists of the Israelite tribes. Nor is it necessary to draw a hard line between the more recent disciplines and literary criticism. The final stages in the compilation of the Biblical material were literary; and even oral tradition, if it takes such a rigid and unchanging form as some of its exponents assert, may be handled to some extent by the same methods. The modern techniques, then, are to be seen as supplementing the older ones, taking over where they stop short, and correcting their excessive and misplaced application. At the same time, it must be added that there has been a great change of emphasis, and a great enriching of our understanding of Israelite life and literature.

# 1. The history of the listed cities

## (a) The types of evidence

It might seem promising to trace the history of the various

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7. Cf. the title of his largest work, Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Studien.

8. M. Noth, Das System der zwölf Stämme Israels, Stuttgart, 1930



cities, and so discover at what period they were all of importance, or at what time they all shared some such characteristic as might lead to their being grouped together. For example, conclusions have been drawn from the absence of Hebron and Shechem from later history, compared with their prominence in the period up to David's reign. But such studies are thwarted by the astonishing scarcity of relevant material in the Old Testament, for the time between Solomon and Nehemiah. More Israelite towns are named in Jo.xxi than in the whole second book of Kings. About eight of the Levite cities are unheard of outside our lists; half of them are nowhere else attested after the Conquest. Of the one-third which do appear in later literature, several hold this position only in virtue of their mention in Isaiah's or Jeremiah's laments over Moab<9>. It would seem impossible to draw firm conclusions from such scanty data.

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9. Is.xv.,xvi; Jer.xlviii. The cities are: Bezer/Bozrah, Jahaz, Mephaath and Jazer. Heshbon also appears in Neh.ix.22 and Song vii.4 Shechem's place depends on a passing reference in Jer.xli.5. Doubts whether different spellings refer to the same town make it impossible to produce a precise analysis, but the following groupings may be sufficiently accurate:
- (a) In Jo.xxi and/or 1 Chr.vi only: Alemeth, Jokneam, Abdon, Hammoth-Dor, Hammon, Kartan, Rimmon, Kartah
  - (b) In Jo.xxi//1 Chr.vi and Jo.xiii-xix only: Holon, Jutta, Eltekeh, Gath-rimmon, Kishon, Daberath, Remeth, Engannim, Mishal, Helkath, Jokneam
  - (c) Not after the conquest period: Debir, Ashan, Golan, Ashtaroth, Nahalol
  - (d) Not after David's time: Jattir, Eshtemoa, Rehob
  - (e) Not after Rehoboam's time: Hebron, Gezer, Taanach, Mahanaim
  - (f) Attested in the divided monarchy, or thereafter: Libnah, Beth-shemesh, Gibeon, Geba, Anathoth, Shechem, Beth-horon, Gibbethon, Aijalon, Ibleam, Kedesh, Bezer, Jahazah, Mephaath, Ramoth (Gilead), Heshbon, Jazer

Fortunately we have further resources. To begin with, it is usually reasonable to assume that a city shared the fortunes of its neighbours. A piece of specific information about one place may be a clue to the historical developments affecting the whole of that part of the country<sup><10></sup>. Secondly, pottery series are now well enough known to enable archaeology to supply some reliable information. For the comparatively few sites investigated, dates are confidently given (within fairly narrow limits) to the more conspicuous events - building and destruction, occupation and desolation<sup><11></sup>. The usefulness of such information depends in each case on identifying the site with a Biblical town. For most excavations, this can be done with sufficient assurance, on the basis of historical and geographical information to be derived from the Old Testament and other sources, often supported by the enduring tradition of the place name. But in some ways the most valuable material for our purposes is found in the lists of territories conquered by various Pharaohs and Mesopotamian kings. The Egyptian material relates mostly to the second millennium; with the archives from Tell el Amarna, it gives us some knowledge of the topography of Palestine, and the political situation there, before and perhaps during the Israelite occupation. There is also however in the temple of Amon at Karnak a long list of towns captured by Shishak on his expedition in the fifth

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10. E.g. when 2 Chr.xxviii.18 informs us that Gimzo belonged to Judah, we have grounds to believe that Gezer also did at that time, since it lies further south.

11. E.g. the Levite city Beth-shemesh was deserted for several decades in the ninth-eighth centuries.

year of Rehoboam (c.924 B.C.)<12>. Two centuries later we have the Assyrian kings' accounts of their campaigns in Palestine, which sometimes give more local detail than the Egyptian records, but are in a less complete state of preservation. Between these two bodies of material, the monument of Mesha gives similar information about an area in Transjordan during the ninth century. And finally, there is the unique group of ostraca from Samaria, to which we have already referred, which name a number of places and clans in central Ephraim which are not mentioned elsewhere.

(b) For a date in the tenth century

From this material, together with the Biblical evidence, Albright and others have argued that the only time when all the Levite cities were in Israelite hands was the early tenth century<13>. This was not the case earlier. Jdg.i preserves the tradition that some towns remained Canaanite strongholds after the main Israelite conquest of the land. They include the Levite cities Gezer, Aijalon, Taanach, Rehob and Nahalol. These cannot have come fully into Israelite possession until the monarchy, and are presumably among David's conquests. Probably other peripheral towns such as Eltekeh, Gibbethon, Mishal, Helkath and Jokneam fall in the same category, together

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12. 1 Ki.xiv.25-28; 2 Chr.xii.1-12

13. S. Klein, 'Cities of the Priests and Levites and Cities of Refuge' (Heb.), Mehqarim Eres-Yisraeliyim III.4, 1934/5, pp.81-107; W. F. Albright, Archaeology and the Religion of Israel, Baltimore, 1942, pp.121-5; 'The List of Levitical Cities', Louis Ginzberg Jubilee Volume I pp.49-73, New York, 1945, pp.56ff; Y. Aharoni, The Land of the Bible, Jerusalem, 1962; E.T. A. F. Rainey, London, 1966, p.269.

with Heshbon, Jazer and the towns of Reuben, which had been occupied by Ammon and Moab before the Israelite expansion under David. Eltekeh and Gibbethon belonged, according to Mazar<sup><14></sup>, to the Philistine kingdom of Ekron which subsequently formed the third of Solomon's administrative districts<sup><15></sup>. It can scarcely have acknowledged Israelite suzerainty before David's time; and soon afterwards Gibbethon, at least, was again in Philistine hands<sup><16></sup>. Albright also argues that Anathoth and Alemeth were not founded before the united monarchy.

If these cities were not available to be given to the Levites before the tenth century, neither did some of them remain in Israelite hands thereafter. Gibbethon, as we have seen, belonged to the Philistines in Jeroboam's time; Golan and Ashtaroth, in the eastern provinces, were also lost to Israel soon after Solomon's death, and in Ahab's day the north-eastern border lay between Aphek and Ramoth-Gilead. (Ashtaroth was finally destroyed by the Assyrians in 733). Further south, we learn from the Moabite Stone that Mesha took Jahaz (=Jahazah) and Bezer from Israel in the mid ninth century; Bezer was apparently already in ruins. One may presume that Kedemoth and Mephaath fell into Ammonite hands about the same time. Finally, not only were the towns of Galilee lost to Israel in 733 B.C.; most of them were destroyed, and some were never reoccupied.

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14. B. Mazar, 'The Cities of the Territory of Dan', IEJ 10, 1960, pp.67-70

15. 1 Ki.iv.7ff. The third district lies west of the second, deeper in Philistine territory.

16. 1 Ki.xvi.15

Since it is natural to assume that all the cities allocated to the Levites, apparently according to a coherent plan, were at the time in the control of a single authority (and, further, that this authority was Israelite), Albright has a formidable argument that the list must date to the time of David or Solomon. As he believes that it was originally drawn up on tribal lines, four cities from each tribe, there is a clear contrast of method between the Levite scheme and the Solomonic administrative system, in so far as the latter cut across tribal boundaries<sup><17></sup>. Since the two different approaches could scarcely be employed at the same time, and the tribal boundaries would appear to be superseded by the Solomonic districts, it follows that the Levite scheme belongs to an earlier period in Solomon's reign, or possibly to the end of David's. Albright accordingly associates it with the measures initiated late in David's reign to organise the kingdom, of which we have evidence in his census. He regards the boundary descriptions in Jo.xv. ff. as fruits of this census<sup><18></sup>; and sees it as a bond between the Levite city scheme and the tribal

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17. Albright, Archaeology and the Religion of Israel, pp.140f. Z. Kallai-Kleinmann, 'The Town Lists of Judah, Simeon, Benjamin and Dan', VT 8, 1958, p.136, observes that Alt's school stresses the differences between the tribal boundaries in Jo.xvff. and Solomon's administrative districts. Sixty years ago, however, Alt himself emphasized that Solomon's districts did not represent a deliberate or inadvertent breach of the tribal boundary system (A. Alt, 'Israels : Gaue unter Salomo', 1913, in K.S. II, 1953, p. 87). Aharoni however holds that tribal boundaries were not radically redrawn. Two whole districts might be given to one large tribe, or two small tribes might be combined in one district; but it cannot be shown that the district boundaries joined part of one tribe to part of another. (Y. Aharoni, 'The Province-List of Judah', VT 9, 1959, p.229)
18. Archaeology and the Religion of Israel, pp.123f.

boundaries that, in both systems, the tribes of Simeon and Judah are merged<sup>19</sup>.

Aharoni is convinced by Albright's major arguments, that the Levite city scheme must date to David. He goes beyond other scholars in regarding the tribal boundary system as an innovation of David's, to soften the division between the northern and southern parts of his kingdom. "This system had no basis in the situation prevailing before the rise of the monarchy, which consisted of two separate alliances in Israel and Judah, granting some special status to the tribes in Transjordan. David was probably trying to revive an ancient tradition dating back to a period before the settlement, or at least to its early stages. In this manner he must have hoped to overcome the internal rivalry between Judah and Israel<sup>20</sup>. On this system David based the administration of his kingdom, in which the Levites were to play a leading part<sup>21</sup>. The allocation of Levite cities was therefore part of the Davidic and not of the Solomonic programme.

It must then be explained how Gezer could be a Levite city, since it would appear not to have come into Israel's

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19. 'The List of Levitical Cities', p.58. It is not clear from these two passages what view Albright takes of the relation between the boundary descriptions and the city lists in Joshua. (There is no boundary given for Simeon; its cities are listed in Jo.xix.1-9.)

20. The Land of the Bible, p.267

21. Cf. J. Maier, 'Zur Geschichte des Bundesgedankens und zur Rolle der Leviten in der politischen und religiösen Geschichte des Alten Israel', Judaica 25, 1969, pp.222-228; 'Bemerkungen zur Fachsprache und Religionspolitik im Königreich Juda', Judaica 26, 1970, esp. pp.90f.

possession until Solomon married Pharaoh's daughter<sup><22></sup>. This must have been when Solomon was already king, or at least perhaps regent, at the end of David's reign. Aharoni regards all this as a "dubious over-simplification"<sup><23></sup>. Gezer dominated the route from Egypt to Jerusalem; could David conceivably have passed it by in the course of his conquests? Further, is it credible that Pharaoh should engage in a costly campaign in order to give devastated territory to a rival state? Surely his chief objective was to restore Egyptian authority in Philistia, which had presumably been brought to some extent under Israelite influence. For all we are told to the contrary, Gezer may already have been a Levite city, handed back to Israel as a sop in order to conclude a peace treaty; for Egypt was not at this time strong enough to hazard a direct confrontation with Israel. This argument of Aharoni's can be neither proved nor refuted, for lack of solid evidence.

Albright and Aharoni both seem to be arguing that the system of Levite cities not only could have been, but actually was, set up in David's or Solomon's time. Aharoni here follows Mazar, whose views we shall consider in the next chapter. It is less clear precisely how Albright regards them. In Archaeology and the Religion of Israel he relates the Levite cities to the Cities of Refuge, and sets both in the context of David's organisation of the state, largely on Egyptian lines<sup><24></sup>. In 'The List of Levitical Cities', on the other

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22. 1 Ki.ix.16

23. The Land of the Bible, p.272

24. Pp.120ff.

hand, he speaks of "the development of the Levitic settlements in Palestine." Cities such as Hebron, Libnah, Jokmeam and the other cities of refuge might well have contained Levite families from the time of the conquest. "Gradually the number increased, though it remained concentrated during the pre-monarchic period in the hill-country. It is very unlikely that efforts to settle Levites in the newly conquered Canaanite cities around the periphery of Israel were successful. In any event the destruction of some towns and the loss of others to the pagan neighbours of Israel could not fail to weaken the whole system, artificial in its design from the beginning. We need scarcely suppose that the list of Levite cities was much more than an ideal configuration of the past by the ninth century B.C.E."<25>. The picture seems to be of the spread of a priestly caste with the expansion of Israel, accelerated by a short-lived attempt on David's part to colonise his conquests.

So we find ourselves returning to a position not so very far from Wellhausen's: the Levite scheme was unreal and impractical, a theorist's pipe dream. Only, for Albright, the theorist was in the court of David, and not among the exilic or post-exilic scribes. If such a plan had indeed been devised, and had made sufficient impact to survive in record or memory for four centuries, then we may well suppose that the post-exilic Levites might take it up with enthusiasm. Klein has tried to show that this is reasonable, and has convinced the more conservative scholars<26>.

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25. 'The List of Levitical Cities', pp.58f.

26. Op.cit.



(c) For an earlier date

Kaufmann would go further, and date the scheme to the pre-monarchic period<sup><27></sup>. This is consonant with his view, which we cannot here discuss in detail, that the 'priestly' material and ideology in the Pentateuch and Judges is of very early origin. He has little difficulty in finding weaknesses in Albright's position. "If the programme had been based, to any extent at all, on the formation of actual settlements, how would it have been possible to forget not only Jerusalem, but also Shiloh, Nob, Bethel, Gilgal, Mizpah, Dan, Beersheba, Ramah - cities which possessed shrines and priests? And how could Shechem have been given to the Levites, and not to the Priests?"<sup><28></sup> Secondly, in the time of David and Solomon there were sanctuaries throughout the land, each of which would require a complement of priests and Levites. The division of families in the present form of the scheme, with all the Levites in the north and all the priests in the south, would be unworkable and absurd, and certainly not the sort of arrangement a priestly or Levite party would have advocated<sup><29></sup>. Thirdly, not all the cities in the list were ever actually 'Levite'. Kaufmann takes as instances Gezer, Eltekeh and Gibbethon. Gezer, he believes, first came into Israelite

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27. Y. Kaufmann, The Biblical Account of the Conquest of Palestine, Jerusalem, 1953, esp. pp.40-46

28. Op.cit., p.42

29. It is not clear how Albright regarded the division of the list into Aaronites and Levite clans. Others who take the list as early either view the clan names as later additions, or remove the distinction between Aaronites and other Levites so that all can be regarded alike as full holders of the priestly office.

hands in Solomon's time; Solomon "rebuilt" it, but there is no mention of his establishing a colony of Levites there<sup><30></sup>. The other two cities were conquered by David; however, he did not in general interfere with the population of captured cities, and there is evidence that this area remained solidly Philistine<sup><31></sup>. Finally, how would an author in the time of the monarchy still speak of Danite cities in the west (Eltekeh, Gibbethon, Aijalon, and Gath-rimmon), territory which the tribe had by then lost<sup><32></sup>, and omit all mention of the important city of Dan in the north, where the family of Jonathan ben Gershom held the priestly office?

Kaufmann envisages a period before the setting up of Israelite shrines and 'high places' in the towns of Canaan; the Israelite cultus would still be centralised at the 'Tent of Meeting', and the priestly thinkers would have no cause to envisage a multiplicity of sanctuaries. However, the conquest of Palestine was substantially complete, and arrangements had to be made for its occupation and settlement. In particular, the Levite office of 'guarding the Tent of Meeting' was no longer needed. Kaufmann surmises that the priestly author of Jo.xxi would regard all the priestly and Levite families as remaining entitled to serve at the altar, though in practice only one would do so (there is no sign of any rotation of duty). All would be entitled to a share of the sacrificial

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30. 1 Ki.ix.15ff. See above for Aharoni's suggestions about Gezer.

31. 1 Ki.xv.27; xvi.15. These two cities are not in 1 Chr.vi.

32. Jo.xix.47; cf. Jdg.xviii

gifts,- though he does not make it clear how they would receive them; for this programme was designed to take them away from the one central shrine and disperse them up and down the land as teachers of the Law and of the sacred traditions of Israel. They would in any case need a supplementary income, for which the scheme provided by giving them dwelling-places and land on which to raise livestock. However, the plan never gained wide support, and no attempt whatever was made to implement it. Instead, Kaufmann supposes that as Israel took over or founded local shrines, families of priests or Levites, or both, took charge of them; and that in course of time such Levite families were transformed, by a process of assimilation, into families of priests.

So the upshot of Kaufmann's attempt to return to the plain meaning of the text is, as far as this city list is concerned, nearer to Wellhausen's position than to Albright's, in that the scheme is seen as merely a theorist's dream. Even if we leave aside the question whether Kaufmann's understanding of the course of the conquest of Canaan, and of the literary history of the Law and the Former Prophets, is at all credible, his account of Jo.xxi must surely founder on the question of transmission. How can we imagine that a scheme which never bore any relation to reality survived in written or oral tradition for half a millennium, during which it served no party's interest? Nor have we any strong motive to attempt to salvage the wreck, since Kaufmann has no answer to the most important of the questions he himself raises: on what principles

was the list drawn up, and why does it contain these particular cities? Finally, we may perhaps ask whether Kaufmann is here consistent with his own principles. Like the nineteenth-century conservatives, he attacks the critical schools (in this case, of Wellhausen and Alt) for what he regards as their cynical and perverse scepticism, and takes his stand on a comparatively straightforward reading of the Biblical traditions. The account of the conquest, and in particular the 'map of Joshua's land' in Jo.xiii-xix, seem to be taken literally<33>. Yet ch.xxi, which is presented in no less factual and historical a form, and comes (in Kaufmann's view) from the same early period, is "unrealistic and utopian!"<34>

(d) For a late date

Martin Noth, on the other hand, in the first edition of his commentary on Joshua, adopted a position close to Wellhausen's, though on somewhat different grounds. Subsequently he modified his view, in the light of the work of Alt and others, but he remained reluctant to trace the list back beyond the end of the seventh century<35>. Before this, Levites played no prominent part in the life of the country, and there is no indication that they enjoyed a special position in these particular towns. The fact that some of the places possessed famous sanctuaries dating from early times is, he observes,

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33. Kaufmann, op.cit., pp.56f.

34. Op.cit., p.43

35. "A list of 'Levite cities', i.e. of towns in which families lived who claimed Levite origin, clearly belongs in the post-Deuteronomic period!" - Noth, Das Buch Josua, 2nd ed., p.136.

no proof of the antiquity of the list. There would be a natural tendency for families of Levites, if they were indeed of priestly character, to settle at shrines. He inclines to think that the names of the Levite clans, Kohath, Gershon and Merari, together with Aaron as a separate family, were an integral feature of the list, and finds in them a tangible indication of late date; for they are not found elsewhere in Old Testament literature dating from before the exile. This tallies with his view of ch.xxi as one of the latest additions to the book of Joshua.

In his article "Überlieferungsgeschichtliches zur zweiten Hälfte des Josuabuches"<sup>36</sup>, Noth puts his finger on two of the weaknesses of Albright's argument to which we have seen Kaufmann draw attention. The first is the assumption that at the time of the origin of the list, all the Levite cities must have been in Israelite hands. To this extent Noth agrees with Kaufmann. However, whereas Kaufmann sees the list as a plan for the future, Noth suggests that in parts it may preserve traditions of a bygone age. In such a historical and cultural context as this, traditional cultic links may transcend current political realities. And the second point is Albright's almost total ignoring of what Alt and Noth regard as the key feature of the list: its omission of the central hill territories of Judah and Ephraim.

Noth himself has no confident explanation of these gaps.

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36. Nötscher festschrift, Bonn, 1950, pp.152-167

He suggests, however, that they might accord with the political situation of a period shortly before the 'Samaritan schism' became formal. This terminus ante quem is provided by the Samaritan Pentateuch, whose version of Num.xxxv relates to Jo.xxi. The breach was therefore not yet complete at the time Jo.xxi and Num.xxxv were composed. It is to be assumed, however, that relations were already so strained that Jerusalem would not recognise the claims of Levite families in Samaria. One must also assume, on this hypothesis, that Judah had lost what little territory she had held north of Jerusalem, so that the four Levite cities in this area were now the wrong side of the border<sup><37></sup>. In such a situation, the list might cover a sort of Palestinian diaspora of Levites - the places where families lived, who had some sort of rights at the Jerusalem Temple. It would then be composed some time after the family-lists of Ezra ii and Neh.vii, which show no sign of the clan-divisions of Levi, and in whose time Jerusalem seems to have controlled the neighbouring towns to the north.

However, in his commentary<sup><38></sup> Noth concedes that there is no other material of so late a date in the book of Joshua, and that such a theory does not completely account for the lack of Levite city-names over so much of the hill country of Judah. He therefore leaves open the possibility that the list might date to the end of Josiah's reign, as Alt held.

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37. But would they not then fall within Samaria, and so again be disqualified from 'Levite' status?

38. Das Buch Josua, 2nd ed., p.131

It appears then that this Biblical and archaeological material can be used in support of widely varying hypotheses. We must now see if research on traditio-historical or form-critical lines will lead to more definite results.

## 2. The setting of the lists

The Levite city list in Chronicles has only the scantiest introduction. 1 Chr.vi.39(54) simply introduces a state of affairs, with no indication of any particular historical circumstances: "These are their dwelling places . . ." And although Jo.xxi is set at a fairly precise point in history, towards the end of the allocation of territory after the Israelite conquest of Palestine, we cannot take this altogether at its face value. However, the chapter does offer some scope for traditio-historical investigation, which has been exploited by Martin Noth<sup>39</sup>.

Unlike most earlier scholars, Noth dissociates Joshua from the first four books of the Bible. He agrees with many of his predecessors that the book falls into two halves; but whereas they would in general regard the first as continuing the E and possibly the J narratives, and the second as a priestly compilation, he sees chs.xiii-xxi as a complex with a pre-history of its own, and finds no prima facie literary relation between the other chapters and the Pentateuchal sources (apart from D). So he insists that the study of Joshua must

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39. For this whole section, see M. Noth, Das Buch Josua, Tübingen, 1938; 2nd ed. 1953

start from its own text, free from any assumptions derived from supposed connections with Genesis etc. And the upshot of such an investigation, as he pursues it in his "Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Studien" (vol. I), is that the books of Deuteronomy and Joshua are not to be considered as the conclusion of a 'Hexateuch', but as the beginning of a historical work covering also the books of Judges, Samuel and Kings. In view of the Deuteronomic material scattered more or less freely throughout these books, giving them overall a consistent and clearly recognisable theological outlook, this hypothesis is very attractive and has won wide support<sup><40></sup>.

We are not here concerned with Noth's analysis of the first half of the book. In the introduction to his commentary, he follows Alt<sup><41></sup> in finding two sources for the city-lists in chs.xiii-xix: first, a system of tribal boundaries covering the whole claimed extent of the promised land, including some areas east of the Jordan; and second, a list of towns in the kingdom of Judah after its division into twelve districts. The boundary-list seems to go back to before the time of David<sup><42></sup>; the tribes of Reuben, Simeon and Levi are omitted, presumably an indication that already they had ceased to have a separate existence as territorial units. The district-

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40. E.g. A. Bentzen, Introduction to the Old Testament, Copenhagen, 1948-9, 6th ed. 1961, pp.73f.; I. Engnell, Gamla Testamentet I, pp.210ff.

41. A. Alt, 'Das System der Stammesgrenzen im Buch Josua', 1927, in K.S. I, 1953, pp.193-202

42. M. Noth, 'Studien zu den historisch-geographischen Dokumenten des Josuabuches', Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästinavereins 58, 1938, pp.185-255, esp. p.252



lists, on the other hand, show evidence of Josiah's conquests enlarging certain of the twelve districts beyond the previous borders of Judah, and apparently adding a thirteenth in the south<sup><43></sup>. The basic district system, which is here enlarged, would of course date from an earlier time, but must be post-Solomonic. The two types of list were combined and modified to show the tribes' possessions at the time of the conquest. The Deuteronomic historian subsequently used this material in his account of the conquest of Palestine under Joshua; he is responsible for introducing Joshua as presiding over the allocation. In Noth's view, these two developments must both have taken place within the period between Josiah's conquests and the composition of the Deuteronomic history. The list of Levite cities in Jo.xxi seems to have passed through the same stages: first, it was the Israelites who were said to make the allocation; later, Joshua was made the chief figure, and later still (as in xiv.1) a priestly hand added Eleazar the priest and the heads of houses. So Noth suggests<sup><44></sup> that this passage may have been joined to the secular allocations in the Josianic period, before the whole complex was taken up into the Deuteronomic History. Chapter xx, on the other hand, is of a different character; Noth regards it as dependent on Dt.xix.1ff., and would not trace it to any period earlier than Josiah's. (His arguments, however, do not appear to apply strongly to vv.7ff., which may well contain earlier material,

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43. Op.cit., pp.248-255; and M. Noth, 'Israelitische Stämme zwischen Ammon und Moab', ZAW NF 19, 1944, pp.49ff.

44. Josua, 2nd ed., p.15

as far as their literary form is concerned.)

Whereas in the introduction to his commentary Noth speaks of Jo.xxf. as passing through the same stages of development as the earlier chapters, in later pages<45> he shows that they were originally of a distinct character. They are presented as an appendix to what precedes; they are unlike the previous city lists in being concerned, not with the occupation of Canaan, but with the laws to be observed in the land. The Levite cities differ radically from the other tribes' holdings, in being scattered throughout Palestine. Levi has no defined territory; there is therefore no contradiction with xiii.14,33; xiv.4. Noth seems to consider that the cities of asylum were not originally included in the Levite list, pointing to (i) parallel lists where the refuge-cities are left out<46>; (ii) the misplacing of Shechem in Ephraim instead of Manasseh<47>; (iii) the double entry for Hebron. He suggests that Hebron alone might have had an original place in both lists, and offers this as the reason both for the double entry, and for the attraction of the other refuge cities into the Levite list. This does not seem wholly satisfactory. It is difficult to

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45. Op.cit., pp.123ff.

46. Jo.xxi.36f. cf. xiii.8; xxi.32 cf. xix.35bb. (The latter example covers only two cities, and depends on the equations Hammoth-dor = Hammath and  $\text{חַרְמֵז} = \text{חַרְמֵז}$ ). Noth might also have mentioned Jo.xxi.27 cf. xiii.31, where however only one city is involved. In the case of the other nine tribes, the names in Jo.xxi occur in a different order or not at all in the earlier lists. It is to be observed that, for the one really convincing example (Reuben), the text in Jo.xxi.36f. is suspect. It is omitted by some of the Hebrew MSS, and adheres with unusual fidelity to the corresponding passage in Chronicles.

47. But see above, pp.154ff.

see how a redactor could be at the same time so careful as to insert the various cities of refuge in appropriate places in the Levite list, and so inattentive as to set two uncoordinated references to Hebron side by side. One would have expected the new material to appear either in an undigested lump, perhaps at the beginning or end, without regard to duplications; or else blended tastefully into the list, without glaring anomalies.

Noth has a clearer point to make concerning the summary of the allocation to each clan, in Jo.xxi.4-7. He observes that v.8a repeats v.3 almost verbatim, and takes this as evidence that the intervening verses are a subsequent addition. They do in fact break the flow of the passage; v.3 promises an account of "these cities and pasture lands," which vv.4-7 do not really offer. (Indeed, the list of cities is further delayed by an explanatory note about Hebron, and does not begin in earnest until v.13). It may have been added to give the chapter a similar form to the other tribal allocations (cf. the end of v.8). Noth regards the division of the cities between the various tribes as secondary, on the ground that the sequence of the tribes here does not correspond to their normal order elsewhere. An editor has taken a list of towns arranged in geographical order, and divided them between the tribes as best he could. The tribal totals, and the summary (vv.3-7), depend on this division, and are therefore additions to the original list. There is however no indication that Noth can discern whether the distinction between the three clans of Levi and the Aaronites is original or secondary; it

must be taken as original until proved otherwise.

If this clan structure is an organic part of the list, it points to a late date. The pattern Kohath, Gershom, Merari seems unknown in Ezra ii.40 and Neh.vii.43, whereas it appears to be observed consistently in P<48>. The separation of Aaronites from Kohathites is first found some time after the exile. But even if these divisions were added to an older list, such a list of 'cities of Levites' belongs clearly, in Noth's view, to the post-Deuteronomic period. "That a number of the cities had been celebrated pre-Deuteronomic sanctuaries, simply reflects reality; it is no proof of the antiquity of the list!"<49>

We see here how the interpretation placed on the expression 'Levite city' goes far towards determining the date and character of the list. Noth assumes, without considering any alternatives, that it meant "towns in which there lived families which claimed Levite origin," and relates it to the renaissance of interest in Levi to be seen within the book of Deuteronomy. We shall have occasion to look into this question further, in the following chapters.

### 3. Comparison with other city lists

The formal resemblances between the Levite city list and other such lists in the book of Joshua is clear enough. In

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48. But cf. Möhlenbrink, 'Die levitischen Überlieferungen des Alten Testaments', ZAW 52, 1934, p.227.

49. Noth, Josua, 2nd ed., p.131

addition to the more obvious points, two details may be mentioned. In ch.xv the groups are set in four geographical regions: the extreme south (v.21), the lowland (v.33), the hill country (v.48), and the wilderness (v.61). The list in ch.xxi is somewhat similarly divided into four areas, one for each of the three Levite clans and one for the Aaronites. And secondly, reference is regularly made in a standard form to the area around the listed towns. In Jo.xv, this comes at the end of each group: e.g. v.36b, "fourteen cities with their villages." In xxi it comes not in the group but in the regional summaries, e.g. v.19: "The cities of the descendants of Aaron, the priests, were in all thirteen cities with their pasture lands," and in the final concluding formula (v.41), to which there is no parallel in ch.xv. A possibly more significant difference is the repetition of the "pasture-lands" after each item in the Levite list.

(a) The view of Alt

Over a long period, Alt has produced a number of illuminating studies of such place-lists in the Old Testament. Starting from such obviously valuable material as the list of officers and administrative districts in 1 Ki.iv.7ff.<50>, and the substantial bodies of material in Joshua xv. ff.<51>, he has progressed to a number of the less apparently promising passages, including Jo,xxi<52>. His conclusion is that the lists

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50. Alt, 'Israels Gaue unter Salomo', 1913, in K.S. II, 1953, pp.76ff.

51. E.g. A. Alt, 'Judas Gaue unter Josia', 1925, in K.S. II, 1953, pp.276ff.

52. A. Alt, 'Bemerkungen zu einigen juddischen Ortslisten des

relating to the southern kingdom mostly date from the time of Josiah, in their present form, though in many cases they may well be revisions of earlier material. Prima facie this is a promising period - a period when the physical borders, the political institutions and the religious practice of the nation were dramatically changed; a period, thus, for the re-drawing of boundaries and the re-writing of records; and the last such period before the end of the monarchy. However, it may be that Alt goes too far, in dating nearly all the material to this time. As he views it as a fairly coherent, roughly contemporary corpus, we must start our review of his position where he began, and consider briefly his dating of the city-lists of Judah.

In his article 'Judas Gaue unter Josia', Alt begins by distinguishing three types of material in Jo.xv.ff.: (a) brief fragmentary notes about events in the conquest of the territory, and cities not yet captured (some of these notes being repeated in Jdg.i); (b) tribal boundary-lists, in principle dividing the whole of Palestine between the tribes (excluding Simeon and Dan, and of course Levi)<53>; (c) lists of the principal

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Alten Testaments', 1951, in K.S. II, 1953, pp.289-305  
 53. See A. Alt, 'Das System der Stammesgrenzen im Buch Josua', 1927, in K.S. I, 1953, pp.193-202, where he argues for an underlying document presenting the territorial claims of the members of the old Israelite tribal league, as they stood in the late pre-monarchic period. These claims included cities and territory not yet won from the Canaanites, and in principle covered the whole Promised Land. The boundaries may have been defined in the course of inter-tribal disputes at the central shrine. See also M. Noth, 'Studien zu den historisch-geographischen Dokumenten des Josuabuches', Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästinavereins

towns possessed by the various tribes. These lists are given in full for Simeon<sup><54></sup>, Judah, Benjamin and Dan; only fragments remain for Issachar, Zebulun, Asher and Naphtali, and there are no lists at all for Ephraim and Manasseh. The boundary-lists and content-lists agree closely enough over the Judah-Benjamin boundary, but there are major discrepancies further north and in the west, where the town-lists of Benjamin and Dan encroach on the boundaries of Ephraim<sup><55></sup>. So Alt is convinced that the city-lists are not a variant presentation of the boundary-tradition, but come from a different source and possibly a different period. Indeed, he imagines there may have been two sources: a full one for the southern region, another for the northern territories (in which the compiler was less interested), and no ready information at all about central Israel.

In this article, Alt concentrates on the full southern lists, to be found in Jo.xv.21ff.<sup><56></sup>, xviii.21-8 and xix.41-6, together with the names preserved only in the Septuagint version of Jo.xv.59<sup><57></sup>. These divide into twelve paragraphs, each giving a geographical group of towns, and ending with the formula "X cities with their villages!"<sup><58></sup> He concedes that

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58, 1938, pp.185-255, who seeks to derive the whole of the material on the northern tribes' territories from the boundary-document, supplemented by Jdg.i, Jo.xxi etc.

54. Jo.xix.2ff.; cf. the first group of Judahite towns, Jo.xv.28ff.

55. E.g. Bethel, Ophrah; the area around Gezer.

56. Excluding vv.45-7, on form-critical grounds.

57. He treats the northern material, with perhaps more ingenuity than success, in 'Eine Galiläische Ortsliste in Josua xix', ZAW 45, 1927, pp.59-81.

58. This formula is missing from the Danite list, xix 41ff.,

the numbers are probably secondary, but regards the grouping as an original feature. There are twelve groups, then, reminiscent of the twelve administrative districts of Solomon. He thinks they were not at first divided between the four tribes, but formed a single list; and finds evidence of a dismembering operation in the repetitions and overlaps between parts of ch.xv and the later sections<59>. Since then the original list was not of tribal territories, and the arrangement of towns within the dozen groups seems to follow no geographical pattern, Alt can only think that it was indeed designed like Solomon's, as a list of administrative districts, which can only have related to the kingdom of Judah.

But do we know of any time in history when Judah possessed precisely this territory? The most northerly cities in the list, such as Bethel, Ophrah, and Jericho, belonged to the northern kingdom as long as it existed. Thereafter, Judah was always ready to annex them, but unable to do so until the power of Assyria declined. Josiah seems to have attempted to take over the whole province of Samaria; however that may be, he certainly laid his hands on Bethel<60>, and later we hear of Bethel and Jericho as the native cities of returned exiles<61>. We do not hear of Josiah conquering the Philistine territory listed as Danite in Jo.xix.41ff., and Alt is at some pains to explain in what sense it might be considered Israelite

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perhaps because of the intrusion of the note on Leshem/Laish.  
59. xv.28ff. cf. xix.2ff.; xv.33 cf. xix.41.; xv.60f. cf. xviii.22,28  
60. 2 Ki.xxiii.15  
61. Ezra ii.28,34; cf. Neh.vii,32,36, and Neh.iii.2



at this time. We are not to think of the 'five towns' being captured (except for Ekron), but of their influence being so limited that they no longer dominated the surrounding countryside and villages. In Ezra and Nehemiah, returned exiles are listed as belonging to Lod, Hadid and Ono, which are in this general area<sup>62</sup>.

Alt concludes by describing how this district system might have been developed by Josiah from one in existence since soon after the division of the kingdom, by enlarging the north-eastern and north-western districts to include the newly conquered areas without changing the total number. He believes, indeed, that the boundaries in the heart of Judah may well go back to a period before the monarchy, and represent the territory of such clans as the Kenizzites, Calibbites and Kenites. But as it stands, the document lists the cities of Judah at the height of Josiah's power.

Alt returns to the distinct geographical and political areas within the southern kingdom in his essay on other city-lists of Judah<sup>63</sup>. The hill country is to be divided south of Hebron. The northern part is the ancient homeland of Judah and of the Davidic dynasty, and continued under the rule of Jerusalem in the Persian empire. Further south is the territory of other clans, Caleb etc. and Simeon, which was incorporated into Judah by the time of David, but lost again at the exile.

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62. Ezra ii.33, cf. Neh.vii.37, and Neh.xi.34f.

63. 'Bemerkungen zu einigen judäischen Ortslisten', 1951, in K.S. II, 1953, pp.289-305.

In these circumstances, Alt is not surprised that the southern region is only thinly represented in such passages as 2 Sam.xxiii.8ff., 1 Chr.ii,iv; but finds it most remarkable that it contributes several cities to the Levite list, whereas there are none further south, nor between Jerusalem and Hebron. Similarly, the central hill country of Ephraim is represented in Jo.xxi only by Shechem, which Alt, like Noth, believes to be a late addition to the list. These two gaps, separated by the line of Levite cities of Benjamin, give the list a distinctive character which requires explanation. Albright appears to have missed this point altogether; writing of "the development of the Levitic settlements in Palestine," which "remained concentrated during the pre-monarchic period in the hill-country,"<sup>64</sup> he seems to have in mind a dispersal of Levite families outwards from the central highlands. It is however difficult to imagine that, in the normal course of population movement, they should have so completely drifted to the outskirts of the kingdom as to leave a vacuum at the centre. Nor is it any more probable that the movement was in the opposite direction, from the outskirts inwards, with the penetration of the core of Israel not yet complete at the time the list was compiled. Alt therefore concludes that the distribution of the cities must result from some definite political forces. Further, he asserts (with reference to his previous article) that some of the Levite cities, such as Eltekeh, Gibbethon and Gath-rimmon, did not fall into Israelite

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64. 'The List of Levitical Cities', pp.58f.

hands until well after the time of Solomon, so that the dating of Klein and Albright for the list is impossible<sup>65</sup>.

What events, after the division of the monarchy, might account for such a distribution of the Lev<sup>y</sup>ites? Alt thinks at once of the account in 2 Ki.xxiii of Josiah's reform - an account which he attributes, apart from certain verses, to the royal annals of Judah. In verses 8 and 19f., which have a good claim to authenticity, we see the king removing the priests from the cities of Judah. Presumably these extended over the same area as the defiled High Places, 'from Geba to Beersheba'. The city of Jerusalem and its environs were a royal domain, distinct from Judah; priests could congregate there, where they would be needed to serve in the Temple. We may perhaps extend this area to include the four Benjamite cities in the list, although one of them is named in this verse as a city of Judah. Alt tries to press the argument further, to cover the group of Levite cities in the west, in the Shephelah and the coastal plain; some of these, he says, had only recently come under Josiah's rule, and might well serve as homes for evicted priests. But were these not also cities from which he turned them out? Or were they in fact different from the 'cities of Judah' 'from Geba to Beersheba'? It is true, we are not told where the priests were to go. Was it intended that they should all join the Jerusalem establishment? It is not clear how v.9 is to be interpreted, and in any case Alt regards it as an editorial addition. We might possibly imagine

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65. K.S. II, p.297, n.1

that the king's concern was simply that each priestly family should be removed from the shrine with which it had been connected. This 'general post' does not emerge naturally from 2 Ki.xxiii.8, nor would it help Alt's case; it would leave us seeking a reason why priests from other shrines were not able to take up residence in central Judah, but only in the outlying areas. However, Alt has a second line of argument. The history, as we have it, is far from complete; and what the historian does record is not exactly the historical fact, but rather the intention of the royal decree. In the event, the king's death cut it off before it had taken effect in the more remote parts of the realm.

Such a view leaves very little time for the list of cities to establish itself, before the catastrophe of the exile. Moreover, in view of the testimony of Jeremiah to the speedy reversal of so many of Josiah's reforms, one would not expect such a half-completed measure to make any impact on history; enough impact, that is, to be worth recording in the highly selective Deuteronomic History. But this objection can at once be reversed, and made the strongest support of Alt's position. The Deuteronomic historian, and the editors who filled out his work, were indeed selective; but the principles by which they picked their material were not so much historical as theological and political. We know that the compilers of Dt.xii,ff. had a strong interest in the Levites, which was taken up (in a somewhat different sense) by the hand responsible for xvii-xix, and again by the author of x.8f., xxxi.9,25.

The Deuteronomic History shows fewer traces of this interest, but it does appear in three passages where Levites are gratuitously introduced as bearers of the Ark<sup>66</sup>, and in 1 Ki,xii,31. The interpretation of this verse is doubtful, and is discussed above<sup>67</sup>. There is no other sign that Levites were of importance, or indeed known at all, between the time of David and that of Deuteronomy<sup>68</sup>. It is therefore unlikely that the Levite cities made a lasting impact on the course of Israelite history, whatever the point at which they were instituted. And further, it becomes difficult to find another period in which this ineffective statute might be regarded as of importance. The sixth-century historians do appear to refer to official archives, and it is conceivable that here also they may have seized upon the dead letter of an age long past as grist to their mill. But unless strong grounds are presented for thinking otherwise, it is easiest to suppose that the setting up of the Levite cities was a fairly recent and no doubt controversial event, within the context of the surge of interest in the Levites.

We have been speaking so far chiefly of the Levite cities in and around Judah. What of the situation in the north? How are we to account for the fact that no town in Mt. Ephraim is listed<sup>69</sup>? Alt points out that, according to 2 Ki,xxiii,19f.,

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66. 1 Sam,vi,15; 2 Sam,xv,24; 1 Ki,viii,4. The point of view is that of Dt,x,8f.,xxxi.

67. Pp,21f.

68. We discount the evidence of the Chronicler, which in this respect is sheer fantasy. See above, pp.85ff.

69. Alt regards Shechem as an intrusion; see above, pp.153f.

Josiah removed all the shrines of the high places in the cities of Samaria, and slew their priests. Like their brethren in the south, these would no doubt be Yahwists and, in Alt's view, Levites. But it is the Assyrian province of Samaria, which Josiah had briefly taken over<sup>70</sup>, which is so conspicuously devoid of Levite cities. This is a tidier state of affairs than we found in Judah. Here there is no question of priests being resettled in one place or another; as far as the king's writ ran, they were liquidated. And there would be so much the less incentive to others to take their place, as drastic action had also been taken against their shrines<sup>71</sup>. One may doubt whether after Josiah there would long be a total priestly vacuum in the area, but it might perhaps be some time before any place could aspire to the status of 'Levite city'. It is a more serious question whether the king ever gained such control over the whole of this area as to be able to exterminate all the major established priesthoods throughout Ephraim. If the king's writ ran slowly in southern Judah, how was it so suddenly effective in Samaria? Perhaps it was easier to take stern measures in newly conquered territory. But why should Josiah be settling Levites in newly conquered territory in the south-west, but removing them from newly conquered territory in the north? Was it a question of the political allegiance of the different groups: the dispersal of a loyal priesthood to cement the new southern territories to Jerusalem, and the suppression of a possible nucleus of disaffection in

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70. He presumably marched to Megiddo, where he met his death, in defence of his northern frontier.

the north? Then what is to be said of the group of Levite cities further north still? Were the listed cities of Asher and Naphtali, Zebulun and Issachar, - not to mention those east of the Jordan, - really in Josiah's empire? If so, why did they not receive the same treatment as those of Samaria? And if not, how do they come to be listed as Levite cities in Josiah's time?

Alt's suggestion, then, seems to raise more questions than it answers. Josiah's activities in the later years of his reign do not explain the peculiar distribution of the Levite cities. Consequently, when in a subsequent essay<sup>71</sup> Alt observes that the fortresses attributed to Rehoboam in 2 Chr.xi.6-10 are grouped in the southern 'hole' in the Levite system, we are not led to concur in his conclusion that they too are to be attributed to Josiah. Rather the contrary; if the lists really are so related as Alt supposes, then we have in Chronicles some testimony that they relate to the closing years of the united monarchy. But are they so evidently interdependent? Hebron and Aijalon figure in both systems, the latter (with Zorah, another 'fortress') lying within the western group of Levite cities. Alt speaks of soldiers being settled on the ejected priests' pasture lands, and imagines that the fortress list has its origin at a somewhat later stage in the process than Jo.xxi; by then the Levites had been evicted from more of their cities, including Aijalon and Hebron.

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71. A. Alt, 'Festungen und Levitenorte im Lande Juda', 1952, in K.S. II, 1953, pp.306-315

But in fact the location of this chain of fortress cities calls for no subtle explanation. They are, in general, the places within a moderate distance from Jerusalem which would bear the brunt of an Egyptian attack - which Rehoboam had more reason to fear than Josiah; so there is no particular cause to associate them with the latter. In any case, unless we are to suppose that the king turned out the priests to make room for his soldiers - a policy for which neither reason nor evidence can be found - the fortress-list could be no more than a consequence of the Levite vacuum in northern Judah; it offers no explanation of how that 'hole' came to exist, and is even less relevant to the situation in Samaria. There indeed one might have expected Josiah to establish garrisons. Perhaps he did, and they have been lost in those gaps in the recorded history to which Alt draws attention. The fact remains that there is no direct evidence that Josiah established any such fortresses.

There seems then to be no substantial connection between 1 Chr.xi and Jo.xxi. On the other hand, there is a real relation, at least in form and Biblical context, between the Levite city list and the town-lists earlier in Joshua. Although Alt sets out to treat them independently, he follows very similar lines of argument. In each case, after stripping off the tribal divisions, he finds a single list of towns covering a surprisingly large area. When was this area under unified political control? And what circumstances might have given it its special features? This last question receives,



as we have seen, quite different treatment in the two cases; but the geographical issue is to a large extent the same for both. What were the boundaries of Judah in Josiah's time? Is there another period that suits better the lists of Jo.xv etc., and Jo.xxi?

(b) Cross and Wright

Alt's position has been discussed in a series of articles which appeared a few years ago<sup>72</sup>. His main contention is usually accepted, that the list of Judahite cities represents the twelve administrative districts of the southern kingdom. The issues under review are details of the district and national boundaries, and the date of the system as a whole. To these questions are brought archaeological findings unknown when Alt made his original study. Cross and Wright, for instance, support their contention that Judah was divided into administrative districts by David, by pointing to the palaces and storehouses which have been unearthed at Lachish and Beth-shemesh, and dated to the early tenth century. These, and the fortifications and installations at Debir, are in their opinion on too large a scale for anything less than the seat of a provincial administration. To this they add the statement in 2 Chr.xi.23, that Rehoboam "distributed some of his sons through all the

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72. F. M. Cross (Jr.) and G. E. Wright, 'The Boundary and Province-lists of the Kingdom of Judah', JBL 75, 1956, pp.202-226; Y. Aharoni, 'The Province-lists of Judah', VT 9, 1959, pp.225ff.; B. Mazar, 'The Cities of the Territory of Dan', IEJ 10, 1960, pp.65-77; Z. Kallai-Kleinmann, 'Note on the Town Lists of Judah, Simeon, Benjamin and Dan', VT 11, 1961, pp.223-227.

districts of Judah and Benjamin, in all the fortified cities; and he gave them abundant provisions,"- remarking that it reads as if the system was already in existence, and not then being instituted for the first time. They go on to suggest that this might have been the reason why Solomon did not set up districts in Judah: they were already in existence!

There are, however, good reasons why the province-list (in its present form) can not be placed quite so early. To begin with, it lists Zorah rather than Beth-shemesh; whereas it is clear from the remains that Beth-shemesh continued to be the important town in the area until its destruction some time in the ninth century. After that, it lay empty for some time, before being reoccupied as a village in the eighth century. Secondly, Jericho appears in the list, although it seems to have been uninhabited until the time of Ahab<sup>73</sup>. Thirdly, the Wilderness area would not, on archaeological evidence, be sufficiently heavily settled to constitute a province until the ninth century, when a large number of towns and forts were built there<sup>74</sup>. Finally, the northern part of Benjamin was Israelite throughout most of the history of the divided monarchy; Abijah conquered it for Judah late in the tenth century, according to the Chronicler<sup>75</sup>, and it must have been lost again in the time of Asa or Jehoshaphat. Since Cross and Wright believe that the sites in the Wilderness of the Dead Sea area could not have been fully enough occupied

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73. 1 Ki.xvi.34

74. F. M. Cross (Jr.) and J. T. Milik, BASOR 142, 1956, pp.15f.

75. 2 Chr.xiii. There is no trace of this story in Kings.

before Jehoshaphat, they find themselves dating the form of the list in Jo.xv.21-62 to his reign. We are to suppose that, in the seventh or sixth century, the editor of Jo.xv-xix used this list, together with other material, to describe the territory claimed by Judah at the time of the conquest.

(c) Kallai-Kleinmann

Kallai-Kleinmann agrees that the tribal boundary-system, as indicated by Alt, is an early scheme covering the whole land; though he would see it as a result of David's census, rather than arising out of a hypothetical situation in pre-monarchic times, such as Alt envisages. (The inclusion of Gezer, he considers, indicates the end of David's reign if not the beginning of Solomon's). However, he raises his solitary voice against Alt's theory that the city-lists of Judah, Simeon, Benjamin and Dan are the dismembered remains of a single list of the districts of Judah. He sees reason to regard each tribe's list as a separate document, and separately datable. The list of towns of Simeon in Jo.xix,2ff. differs from the broadly corresponding group in xv.26ff. in spelling, form, order and contents. These can scarcely be variations of a common tradition arising in the course of transmission, Simeon appears to have lost its political identity early in the history of Israel, so one would expect its separate list to be earlier than the version giving its territory as part of Judah. Kallai-Kleinmann finds supporting evidence in the relation between Jo.xix,2ff. and 1 Chr.iv.28-33, in the context of the Simeonite genealogy. This material refers to the reign

of David, and claims to be based on archival sources, at least as far as the genealogy itself is concerned<sup><76></sup>. Kallai-Kleinmann inclines to believe that we may have here in Chronicles one of the few literary traces of David's census of families and their land-holdings, and that Jo.xix.2-8 will belong to the same period.

The Danite town list is another example of a city-list partly or wholly in other tribes' territory. Cross and Wright had pointed out<sup><77></sup> that it was not included in Jo.xv (as Simeon's is, in broad terms), especially when vv.45-7 are excluded because of their different form. And on the other hand there is not room between the listed cities of Judah, with their surrounding lands<sup><78></sup>, for the tribal territory of Dan. Taking into account the somewhat different form of Jo.xix.41ff., they had concluded that it did not represent one of the provinces of Judah. Instead, it was to be regarded as a secondary expansion based on material from the boundary description of Judah and from the tradition behind Jdg.xviii, by a compiler anxious to show the possession of each of the twelve tribes. Kallai-Kleinmann offers an apparently simpler and more satisfactory solution. The Danite list differs in form from, and is in substance irreconcilable with, the Judahite list not because it is a later synthetic construction, but because it is taken from the list of the second administrative

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76. 1 Chr.iv.31b: "These were their cities until David reigned." V.33b: "These were their settlements, and they kept a genealogical record." (R.S.V.)

77. Op.cit., p.204

78. The "villages" of vv.32,36,41 etc.

district of Solomon<sup><79></sup>, which may itself have been based more or less closely on the historical Danite area. But if so, why is there no mention in this list of Gezer, one of the most important towns in the area? Kallai-Kleinmann observes that Pharaoh handed the city over to Solomon in a sacked and desolate condition. In this state, its territory could be counted in the boundary-system<sup><80></sup>, but it would not itself be named as a city in Israelite possession. Subsequently, however, Solomon rebuilt and fortified it and restored it to its full status<sup><81></sup>.

As far as Benjamin is concerned, Kallai-Kleinmann points out that the archaeological evidence produced by Cross and Wright all relates to Judah, and that they are driven to a forced reading of the history of Judah's northern frontier by their desire to treat the Judahite and Benjamite town lists as a single unit. The territory won by Abijah, and included in Jo.xviii.21-24, was lost in the war between Asa and Baasha<sup><82></sup>. Since Cross and Wright correctly rule out so early a date for the list of towns of Judah, on archaeological grounds, the town lists of Benjamin and Judah must be assigned to different periods.

That being the case, the list for Judah can be made to fit the archaeological evidence more comfortably by being moved to a somewhat later period than Jehoshaphat. The excavators'

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79. Cf. 1 Ki.iv.9

80. Jo.xvi.3

81. 1 Ki.ix.1,15f.

82. 1 Ki.xv.17; 2 Chr.xvi.1. The cities mentioned in 2 Chr.xvii.2 can only refer to a narrow strip retaken by Asa, cf. 1 Ki.xv.21f.; 2 Chr.xvi.5f.

dates for the destruction of Beth-shemesh, within the ninth century<sup><83></sup>, may then be accepted, and more time is given for the development of the settlements in the Dead Sea area. Kallai-Kleinmann suggests the time of Hezekiah. By then, Ahaz had lost Beth-shemesh, Timnah, and Aijalon, which appear in other lists but not in Jo.xv, along with a number of other places<sup><84></sup>. On the other hand Hezekiah himself had taken measures, in alliance with Ashkelon, to coerce Ekron, Ashdod and Gaza into the alliance against Assyria<sup><85></sup>; their coming within his sphere of influence, though only for a short time, might account for their inclusion in Jo.xv.45ff.

In sum, Kallai-Kleinmann regards the lists of Benjamin, Judah and Simeon as primarily tribal listings, though with their sub-divisions they reflect the contemporary administrative arrangements. Dan is slightly different, in that an administrative unit, which grew out of historical Dan, has been used to illustrate that tribe's homeland. However, while it is obvious that their tribal character is of importance in their present setting, in the description of the allocation of the land after the conquest, Kallai-Kleinmann offers no 'Sitz im Leben' for such separate lists in the monarchic period, and it is not altogether easy to imagine why they should have been drawn up.

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83. Elihu Grant and G. E. Wright, Ain Shems Excavations, Part V, pp.67ff. and 134ff.

84. 2 Chr.xxviii.18. Two of the cities mentioned here as captured by the Philistines, Gederah and Socoh, appear in Jo.xv.33. Kallai-Kleinmann has to suppose that they had been reconquered by Hezekiah.

85. 2 Ki.xviii.8

(d) Aharoni

Aharoni seizes on this question in his study of the town-lists<sup><86></sup>. He observes that the list of towns of Judah exceeds the boundaries of that tribe; at the same time, it stops short of Jerusalem in the north, so it could not cover the whole southern kingdom. (David's territory while he was king in Hebron would scarcely be so extensive). Again, the fact that it is divided into eleven groups suggests that something is to be added. Alt added Dan as a twelfth district, and divided Benjamin between two of the others. Cross and Wright, omitting Dan from the total, were able to make north Benjamin into a separate unit, thus avoiding the absurdity of a single province extending from En-gedi to Mt. Ephraim. South Benjamin they combined with Kiriath-Jearim and Rabbah, because Kiriath-Jearim appears in both Judah (Jo.xv.60) and Benjamin (xviii.28), and because two cities seem too few to constitute a whole province. Aharoni sees no reason to doubt that two major cities and their dependent territories could constitute a province; he identifies Rabbah with the Rubute of the Amarna correspondence and Egyptian monuments, on the road to Gezer, and surmises that there may have been two towns of Kiriath-Jearim, one on each side of the Judah-Benjamin boundary<sup><87></sup>.

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86. Aharoni, 'The Province-list of Judah', VT 9, 1959, pp.225ff.

87. This has some support from the MT of Jo.xviii.28, where the present reading is וּבְעֵת קִרְיָת. It is usually supplemented from LXX and Syriac to וּבְעֵת וּקִרְיָת יְעָרִים, the last word being assumed to have been lost by haplography with the יְעָרִים following. It is however quite possible that what is intended is not two places but one, 'Gibeah of Kiriath-jearim', as distinct from Kiriath-jearim proper.

This leaves Aharoni still with eleven provinces in Judah, and two districts in Benjamin. Of these, the more southerly includes cities which were in Judah for most of the united monarchy; the more northerly was generally in Israel, - the boundary lying between Mizpah and Bethel. It leaps to mind that the southern group is the remaining district of the kingdom of Judah (and a necessary part, including as it does the capital); the northern group must be something else. Aharoni rejects as far-fetched Noth's suggestion that it was in fact a short-lived thirteenth district of Judah created as a result of Josiah's conquests<sup>88</sup>; in Aharoni's view, Josiah conquered a great deal more territory than this. He prefers to believe that it is basically an administrative district of the northern kingdom. Most of the northern town lists seem to have been of little interest to the historian; some he abbreviated drastically, others (including those for Ephraim and Manasseh) he omitted completely. It is difficult to see the reasons for these variations of treatment. But it is clear enough that the region on the southern border was of interest to Judah; it was never forgotten that it was a part of Benjamin, and in the early years of the divided monarchy battles were

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But it is also noteworthy that the text of the Judahite list contains not Kiriath-jearim simply, but 'Kiriath-baal, that is Kiriath-jearim'.

88. 'Studien zu den historisch-geographischen Dokumenten des Josuabuches', ZDPV 58, 1938, pp.185-255. This is in line with Noth's general contention that there are no genuine city-lists from outside the kingdom of Judah; the apparent exceptions in Dan, Galilee and Transjordan must then be explained away, usually as based on more or less fragmentary boundary-descriptions.



fought to re-unite the tribe.

Where then in history does Aharoni place the province-list of Judah? For Alt, the northern boundary was decisive; but a boundary at Mizpah will suit most periods. Kallai-Kleinmann found evidence in the west, referring to Hezekiah's relations with Ekron, Ashdod and Gaza, and to the Philistine conquest of a number of cities in Ahaz' time<sup><89></sup>. The former group are listed in Jo.xv.45-7, which are to be regarded as an intrusion, on form-critical grounds. They may reflect conditions in Hezekiah's time, but they are irrelevant to the question of the date of the main list. As for the Philistine conquest, Aharoni cannot persuade himself that any traces of it remained in Hezekiah's time. In fact, Kallai-Kleinmann's two arguments are contradictory, the one pointing to a time of Judahite expansion, the other to a period of Philistine encroachment. We know too little of the fluctuations of the western border to be able to use this material to date the Judahite city-list.

Aharoni then reviews the pertinent archaeological data. From the findings at Hazor, he dates the start of Iron Age II c.840 B.C., about sixty years after Cross and Wright. The growth of the towns in the Dead Sea area, and the fall of Beth-Shemesh, must be correspondingly later. Indeed, Beth-shemesh must still have been a substantial city at the beginning of the eighth century, if Amaziah made it his base in the war

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89. See above, p.212

with Joash. Joash would then be responsible for its destruction; up to his time it was a place of importance, which could scarcely be overlooked in such a list as Jo.xv, but thereafter it never rose above the status of a village. Beth-hakkerem, on the other hand, which is found in the Septuagint of Jo.xv,59, was not founded until Iron Age II, and it is to this period that a substantial development of settlements in the Negeb is to be assigned. The one discordant note is Sharuhem, which, if correctly identified, lay unoccupied between the ninth century and the Persian period. However, it is open to question whether the 'Shilhim' of Jo.xv.32 is simply to be understood as a variant or corruption of the 'Sharuhem' given in the broadly corresponding passage, Jo.xix.6; it could well be the name of a different place. The evidence as a whole points firmly to a date not before the eighth century.

The reign of Jehoshaphat is therefore excluded; although Aharoni agrees with Cross and Wright, that the basic organisation of the kingdom is to be expected at that time. For the first fifty years of the divided monarchy there was frontier warfare and the hope of a restoration of the Davidic empire; no doubt in this period the relevant parts of the system set up by Solomon continued, provisionally, in use. Under Jehoshaphat the position was stabilised, and peace cemented by his marriage alliance with Ahab<sup>90</sup>; and the Chronicler speaks of him in terms suggesting a major re-organisation of the kingdom<sup>91</sup>.

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90. 1 Ki.xxii.44; 2 Chr.xviii.1

91. 2 Chr.xvii

But the present form of the province-list comes neither from his time, nor from that of Josiah (whose conquests seem to have been greater than the area covered by the list), but perhaps from the reign of that other notable king and administrator, Uzziah.

In his book The Land of the Bible, Aharoni modifies his view somewhat. While observing that Josiah's stand against Pharaoh Necho at Megiddo "was possible only after the complete annexation of Samaria,"<sup><92></sup> and that he probably controlled the Megiddo province as well, he goes on to say that Josiah probably "changed the interior boundary between Judah and Samaria within the administrative framework of his kingdom, by incorporation of the Bethel region into Judah. This is indicated by the fact that Bethel was part of Judah in the post-exilic period."<sup><93></sup>

This implies either that the whole province-list, as we now have it, dates from Josiah; or that the new northern province, Jo.xviii.21b-23, was added as a supplement. In the latter case, we should have to suppose that the other section of the Benjamite list, vv..25-8, was taken from its place in the list otherwise preserved in Jo.xv by a compiler whose interest lay not in the kingdom of Judah, but in the several tribes and their possessions. So Aharoni comes either to Alt's date for the list, or to an element in his theory of its pre-history which has found little favour.

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92. P.283

93. Ibid.

(e) The city-list of Dan

Quot homines, tot sententiae: but we have found at least some wide agreement that the list of Danite cities in Jo,xix,41ff. is not to be regarded as one of the Judahite districts. In a study devoted to this area<sup><94></sup>, Mazar divides the list into four sections, according to the verse-division (the fourth comprising both v.45 and v.46). Of these, the first was occupied by Dan at the time of the conquest, as witness the stories of Samson<sup><95></sup>. The second had a mixed population until David's time<sup><96></sup>; with the first, it composed Solomon's second administrative district<sup><97></sup>. The remaining areas probably represent territory won from the Philistines after the conquest of Gath and the annexation of Gezer and its dependencies under Solomon<sup><98></sup>. The list itself must have been composed in Solomon's time. Not before, because, apart from the question whether Gezer had ever been Israelite before Pharaoh delivered its smouldering ruins as a dowry, Mazar finds archaeological grounds for dating the Judaeon city of Beth-shemesh to the second half of the ninth century<sup><99></sup>. And not later, because Gath-rimmon was destroyed by Shishak and, according to archaeological evidence, never rebuilt<sup><100></sup>; and

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94. 'The Cities of the Territory of Dan', IEJ 10, 1960, pp.65-77

95. Jdg.xiii.1,25; xiv.1ff.; cf. 1 Sam.vi.12

96. Jdg.i.34f.

97. 1 Ki.iv.9

98. As we have seen (above, p.181), Aharoni suspects that David's conquests may have extended deep into Philistia.

99. There seems no reason to doubt that the Ir-shemesh of Jo,xix,41 is Beth-shemesh.

100. B. Maisler, 'The Excavations at Tell Qasile', IEJ 1,

Gibbethon was in Philistine hands by the time of Jeroboam<sup>101</sup>. In fact, it would appear that the whole of the third and fourth districts of Dan were soon lost, probably as a result of Shishak's invasion. The rest of the Danite territory was taken into Judah, Ephraim and perhaps Benjamin, and the name Dan was thereafter only applied to the city in Naphtali, formerly called Laish.

#### 4. Conclusions

What conclusions may we draw from this survey of the city-lists in Joshua? The first that presents itself is a negative one. The list-form is not tied to a particular period within the monarchy. Lists of towns might be compiled at any time from David onwards, and brought up to date from time to time as boundaries changed. If they had some administrative purpose, they would no doubt be stored in the national archives and accessible to historians even at a much later period. We have just seen reason to believe that Jo.xix.41-46 contains material substantially unchanged since Solomon's time, although the district to which it related was radically altered, if not abolished, by soon after his death.

The Levite city list seems to be in a similar position. The scattered items we possess of historical and archaeological information about a handful of the cities indicate that the basic list relates most nearly to the situation under the

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1950, p.63 n.6.  
101. 1 Ki.xv.27; xvi.15.

united monarchy. It is therefore simplest to suppose that it was composed at that time, and, as an official document, deposited in the Jerusalem archives; whence it was resurrected in Josiah's time, or later, as ammunition in the then current controversy about the position of the Levites. There is no reason to imagine that it was revised from time to time between the reigns of Solomon and Josiah, as we suppose was done with the list of provinces of Judah; as far as the city names are concerned, there is no trace of any additions or deletions due to changing boundaries after Solomon's time. It is theoretically possible that the whole list was devised during or after the exile by an antiquarian, reflecting into ancient history an idea current in his own day; but it is not easy to answer Alt's question, why such a person should omit the towns of central Judah, while including remote places which had only briefly come within the borders of Israel. Noth's suggestion that the list may describe a post-exilic 'Levite diaspora' must be rejected, for the reasons we have given above<sup>102</sup>.

We can not then follow the Wellhausen school in its tendency to attribute lists, as such, to late compilers. However, particular writers did adapt lists to serve their purposes. The author of Jo.xv-xix took the records we have been considering, which seem to have had nothing directly to do with tribal distinctions, and used them to describe the territory allotted to the various tribes. It is only in the framework of the lists, by which they are fitted in to the

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102. See above, p.188.

scheme of a distribution of land after the conquest, that the tribes are named<sup>103</sup>; this framework does not belong to the lists, but was added by the compiler of the book. The process is not quite so obvious in Jo.xxi and 1 Chr.vi; the number of listed towns being smaller, the tribal names occur the more frequently, and seem to be more intimately bound up with the text. We have however already shown reason to believe that they are redactional additions: the omission of Simeon, and the unusual order in which they are given. We can now add that this would be in line with the other lists of the same general type. There is a somewhat similar question concerning the numerical summaries, where a comparison of the Levite city lists throws light on the form. Numbers are not given in the main body of the document as it stands in 1 Chr.vi,51ff., though it is already divided between the tribes. It therefore seems certain that the numerical summaries were added to the Levite city list, and no doubt also to the other lists in Joshua, after the cities had been divided between the tribes.

One thing which our brief consideration of the other lists has shown most clearly is the importance of our understanding of the purpose of a list to our view of its date, and even of its extent. Alt, Aharoni and the others find a list comprising eleven sections, and are at once on the look-out for a twelfth,

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103. The tribes are also named in the fragments of ancient narrative incorporated into this part of the book; e.g. Jo.xv.63; xix.47.

so that we can recognise them as the administrative districts of Judah - at some period! Kallai-Kleinmann, taking each tribal list separately, is the less convincing because he cannot suggest a satisfactory Sitz im Leben for any of them. What, then, is the real purpose of the list of Levite cities? We must address ourselves to this question in the next chapter.



In the last chapter we considered the various settings in history that have been suggested for the Levite cities, ranging from before the monarchy to after the exile. But we have not yet found a completely satisfactory explanation of the list. The most plausible time for all the cities to be under united Israelite rule is the reign of David or Solomon; but we have not been shown why, in this period, no priestly or Levite dwellings should be listed in Jerusalem or in the central Judaeans and Ephraimite highlands (except for Shechem and the Benjaminite strip). Alt and Noth do tackle this geographical problem, while arguing for a later date, but without complete success. Alt's line is attractive, in that he sets the list in Josiah's reign, in the context of the sudden blossoming of concern for the Levites to which the book of Deuteronomy bears witness. But his account of its contents is too subtle and involved to carry conviction. It depends on very wide conquests by Josiah, and on the removal of Levites from Judah to the frontier territories by an edict whose motives are obscure and which was only enforced in certain areas. Noth's idea of a 'Levite diaspora' in the post-exilic period is simpler, but has difficulty in explaining the presence of the Benjaminite cities in the list. It appears from Ezra ii and Neh. vii that this region was in Judah in the fifth century (so its inhabitants would not be 'diaspora'). And if at some

period the boundary was drawn closer to Jerusalem, then Benjamin would be in Samaria, whose cities Noth conceives to have been excluded because of the hostility which later built up into the 'Samaritan schism'. In neither case should we expect these cities to be assigned to Levites. Besides, it is not easy to see how an official list, first composed not too long before the schism, could have reached the books of Joshua and Chronicles in such divergent forms as it now exhibits.

So perhaps we should turn our enquiries in a different direction. Hitherto it has been assumed that the term 'Levite' here has its common meaning, 'a member of the priestly tribe', as in the later strata of Deuteronomy and in the Priestly Code; and that their 'cities' were simply places for them to live in. So Albright speaks of Solomon as "assigning places of residence to priests and Levites"<sup>1</sup>, and of the Cities of Refuge as "no less priestly in character than the Levitic cities"<sup>2</sup>; Noth defines the Levite cities as "towns in which there lived families who claimed Levite origin"<sup>3</sup>; and Alt states that the duties of the Levites lay in maintaining the Law and officiating in its ritual<sup>4</sup>. Perhaps this assumption is not justified, or is less than the whole truth. As we saw in ch. I, our knowledge of the Levites is almost all derived from exilic and post-exilic strata of the Pentateuch, and from

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1. 'The List of Levitical Cities', p.58

2. Op.cit., p.54

3. Josua, 2nd ed., p.131

4. 'Bemerkungen zu einigen jüdischen Ortslisten des Alten Testaments', K.S. II, p.296

Chronicles. The description of the Levite cities in Num.xxxv, and the regulations relating to them in Lev.xxv, come from the same period. If we are to date the original list to the reign of David or Solomon, it may then have referred to a very different situation. As there is no evidence that any other tradition about these cities was kept alive through the period of the monarchy, one would have to suppose that the document had lain dormant for centuries in the Jerusalem archives, with probably no more than a title by way of explanation and introduction, until a scholar-politician at the time of Josiah's reformation, or in the re-cataloguing of the archives after the exile, saw its possible relevance to his own party's circumstances. He would naturally interpret the bare official text in the light of the conditions of his own day. This interpretation might well be far removed from the original intention of the document. If therefore with Albright, Mazar and Aharoni we prefer an early date for the list, we must distinguish between the ancient text and the later uses to which it may have been put. If a really credible explanation can be found, on these terms, of the function or at least the intention of this city list, within the framework of what we know of the Davidic or Solomonic state, it will go far towards completing the proof that the list has its origin in the real politics of this period.

#### 1. Mazar's hypothesis

Mazar attempts such an explanation in his interesting article 'The Cities of the Priests and the Levites' <5>. His

argument rests on three grounds: (i) the general historical credibility of the list; (ii) the role of the Egyptian priesthood in the administration of the Egyptian empire; and (iii) the tasks assigned to the Hebronite clan of Levites in 1 Chr.xxvi.30ff.

Firstly, the character of the list. Mazar follows Lohr<sup>6</sup>, Klein, Albright, Alt and Noth in rejecting the view of the Wellhausen school and of Kaufmann, that it is merely "utopian." So strange a distribution of cities, unevenly spread around the fringes of Israel, could not have been conceived in a pipe dream, but must reflect an actual historical situation. Not all the formal, schematic trappings of the lists themselves, or of the P passages that refer to them<sup>7</sup>, - the division of the Levites into clans, the implication that they are to be the sole inhabitants of their cities, the exact measurements of the surrounding 'pasture lands', - are to be taken as ancient and authentic. But beneath them there remains the tradition that at some time there were such things as Levite cities. The fact that this tradition is preserved in Joshua and Chronicles under different headings and in different contexts suggests that it is drawn from an official archive, presumably in Jerusalem. This is in line with the modern appreciation of the Chronicler's sources, which seem to be largely reliable even for so early a period as the united

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5. VTS 7, 1960, pp.193-205

6. M. R. H. Lohr, Das Asylwesen im Alten Testament, Halle, 1930, p.34

7. Num.xxxv,1-8; Lev.xxv,32-34

monarchy. Mazar holds that the list must have originated in that period, because there is no other point in history when the whole area covered by the Levite cities was under Israelite control.

Secondly, the role of the priesthood. Under Egyptian rule, in the second millennium B.C., certain Canaanite cities were confiscated from the local rulers, turned into Egyptian royal estates, and dedicated by Pharaoh to one or other of the great Egyptian gods. These cities were no doubt fortified; they contained depots for tribute, and a properly staffed temple or shrine; and they tended to be close together in groups. As they belonged to the god, their government would presumably be in the hands of the priests; and Mazar suggests that they would be responsible for the administration of the surrounding area. The Levite cities also seem to be in groups, to some extent; and some of them, such as Beth-shemesh and Debir, are known from archaeological research to have been fortified and to have contained warehouses suitable for collecting district taxes. Since we know that Israel learnt much of its administrative procedure directly or indirectly from Egypt<sup>8</sup>, it is not surprising that Mazar raises the question whether it might not well have been Israelite policy "to settle in provincial capitals loyal Levitic families who were in government service, and whose duties inter alia were

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8. Cf. R. de Vaux, 'Titres et Fonctionnaires Égyptiens à la Cour de David et de Salomon', Revue Biblique, 1939, pp.394-405; J. Begrich, 'Sofer und Mazkir', ZAW 1940/1, pp.1-29; B. Mazar, BIES 13, 1947, pp.105ff. (Heb.)

to collect taxes and manage the royal estates."<sup>9</sup> This is an attractive suggestion, although it seems to go far beyond the Egyptian model. In his article 'Ägyptische Tempel in Palästina'<sup>10</sup>, Alt distinguishes between cities in Palestine devoted to one or other of the great gods of Egypt, - of which cities there are a dozen attested, - and the royal Egyptian garrison posts; and he is clear that the normal practice was to leave the local government and the cultus of the subject territories in Palestine in the hands of the native rulers and priesthoods<sup>11</sup>. His view is that a city would only be given to one of the gods if its capture had been so violent that there was no native administration left! Of the Levite cities, Gezer might well be in this position, handed over by Pharaoh as a sacked and burnt shell; and there might have been others like it. Gibeon and its neighbours, on the other hand, were exempted from conquest. Indeed, their position is scarcely 'provincial', as they are close to the capital. Mazar can only suggest that colonies of Levites were established there to serve in the Temple, like the 'singers' of Neh.xii,29 who lived in villages around Jerusalem.

Mazar's third and most specific argument is based on the closing verses of the passage describing the organisation and duties of the Levites in 1 Chr.xxiii-xxvi. This section begins with the census of Levites, apparently separate from the rest of Israel, at the end of David's life, after he had

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9. 'The Cities of the Priests and the Levites', p.200

10. 1944; in K.S. I, 1953, pp.216-230.

11. This can be seen in the Amarna correspondence

made Solomon king (that is, co-regent). In xxvi,30ff. we come to a baffling passage about the responsibilities of two Levite families. It reads as follows:

"Of the Hebronites, Hashabiah and his brethren, one thousand seven hundred men of ability, had the oversight of Israel westward of the Jordan for all the work of the Lord and for the service of the king. (v.31) Of the Hebronites, Jerijah was chief of the Hebronites of whatever genealogy or fathers' houses. (In the fortieth year of David's reign search was made and men of great ability among them were found at Jazer in Gilead). (v.32) King David appointed him and his brethren, two thousand seven hundred men of ability, heads of fathers' houses, to have the oversight of the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of the Manassites for everything pertaining to God and for the affairs of the king<sup>12</sup>).

As this passage comes in a Levite context (and as Hebron is included in the Levite genealogy in xxiii,12), we have here evidence of Levites holding administrative posts under the united monarchy. Mazar observes that Jazer is one of the Levite cities, and a provincial capital<sup>13</sup>, and sees no reason why the passage should not be taken broadly at its face value. It then gives a date for the settling of Levites in Israelite cities east and west of the Jordan, together with the purpose of this settlement: "for all the work of Yahweh and for the

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12. RSV

13. Num.xxi,32; 2 Sam.xxiv,5. As a Levite city, Jazer falls under Merari; we should expect Levites of Hebron to be Aaronites of the clan of Kohath.

service of the king" (v.30); "for everything pertaining to God and for the affairs of the king" (v.32). The second version of the formula, in particular, seems to give them complete oversight in matters sacred and secular: the divine and royal law, the offerings and the taxes, and presumably also local defence. This is precisely the type of function which Mazar envisages the colonial priests of Egypt performing; here then it can be seen transplanted into the Israelite system.

He also finds it significant that the Levites here are Hebronites. This he takes, reasonably enough, to indicate that they are members of the priestly family of the town of Hebron. (Two other Levite families also appear to be named after towns: Libni<14>, from Libnah, and Jekameam<15>, possibly from Jokmeam)<16>. Hebron had been David's first capital, and was the chief town of the area from which he could expect the strongest support. What more natural than that the clerical nobility of this loyal city should provide the backbone of the national administration?

Finally, Mazar refers for additional support to 2 Chr.xi.5-17. Here we are told first of the "cities for defence" that Rehoboam built to the south and west of Jerusalem, and then of the exodus of Levites from Jeroboam's kingdom to Judah, where they "strengthened the kingdom", at least for three years.

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14. Ex.vi.17; Num.iii.18; 1 Chr.vi.2,5 (17,20)

15. 1 Chr.xxiii.19; xxiv.23

16. Albright, 'List of Levitical Cities', p.56



Mazar would take these two paragraphs in effect in reverse order; Rehoboam received the refugee Levites, and settled them partly in Jerusalem and partly in the newly fortified cities. It is as members or officers of the garrison, then, that they "made Rehoboam the son of Solomon secure;" the Chronicler has perhaps deliberately reversed the order to obscure this point, and to show their contribution to the safety of the realm as lying not in military might but in due observance of the cult and law of Yahweh.

If this interpretation of these passages will stand, Mazar gives us a most valuable glimpse of local government under David and Solomon, and of the position of some at least of the Levites. However, the discussion of 2 Chr.xi is no more than a corollary of the main argument, and will not stand on its own; and it is not clear that 1 Chr.xxvi.30ff. will bear the weight Mazar wishes it to carry. To begin with, the passage is isolated. Though the Chronicler seems ready to introduce Levites into his history at any point and on any pretext, they are usually in Jerusalem, and their function is nearly always within the cult: sacred music, the ministry and maintenance of the Temple, the teaching of the Law. Apart from these verses, the only places where they appear as administrators of anything other than the Temple offerings are 1 Chr.xxiii.4, where 6,000 of them are appointed "officers and judges," and 2 Chr.xix.8ff., where some of their number are appointed alongside priests and heads of fathers' houses to a judicial office in Jerusalem. This does not go far to support Mazar's

thesis. However, the fact that 1 Chr.xxvi.30ff. is practically unique may be a strength, if its meaning is clear enough. It is not the sort of thing the Chronicler would invent; it is well off the beaten track of his hobby-horses. Unless we come upon some other party with a motive to devise and insert such material into the tradition, we must assume that it is founded on fact.

Besides being almost unsupported, the passage shows signs of duplication within itself. Much the same things are said of the family of Jerijah as have been said about Hashabiah and his brethren. One large group has the oversight of Israel westward of the Jordan; the other, even larger, has the oversight of the Reubenites, the Gadites and the half tribe of Manasseh. The terms of reference in the one case are, all the work of Yahweh and the service of the king; in the other, everything pertaining to God and the affairs of the king. So far, all that need give us pause is the fact that the group with the larger area to cover is only two-thirds the size of the other. But it is more than unexpected that the two groups should be set side by side, with no conjunction or cross-reference, but both introduced baldly by the formula "Of the Hebronites, . . ." This would be strange enough in any circumstances; here the difficulty is aggravated by the context. In v.23 the Amramites, the Izharites, the Hebronites and the Uzzielites are named - the four families of Kohath<17>. There then seems to be a break; in v.24 we find ourselves

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17. 1 Chr.xxiii.12

suddenly in the middle of the genealogy of Amram's descendants<18>, who were responsible for the treasuries and the dedicated gifts. In v.29 we have a brief note of the second family, beginning in due form "Of the Izharites, . . .," who performed "external<19> duties as officers and judges. Then we come duly to the next family: "Of the Hebronites, Hashabiah . . .". We certainly do not expect the following sentence to introduce the same family again. It is the Uzzielites' turn to enter. They do not appear at all in the list as it stands; but we cannot assume a textual error and make Jerijah an Uzzielite, both because the term 'Hebronites' is repeated in v.31, and because Hashabiah's and Jerijah's groups perform substantially the same office. The other families have quite distinct roles, as we have just seen. So we have good cause to begin to suspect duplication in vv.30ff. This suspicion is nourished by the following observations:

(a) Jerijah is said to be overall head of the Hebronites. We should therefore strongly expect his name to stand before Hashabiah's.

(b) The duties of Jerijah's family are expressed in more grandiose and comprehensive terms. Hashabiah's brethren could be understood as having control of the levy - the labour force for sacred and secular works - but it is difficult to interpret v.32bb in a way that would not also cover the functions of the

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18. Cf. 1 Chr.xxiii.16f.

19. חיצוניות. It is not at all clear what this means, unless it is simply "outside Jerusalem" i.e. provincial. NEB translates 'secular'.

Izharites<20>.

(c) Apart from the parenthesis, v.31b, the passage about Jerijah follows the model of Hashabiah's entry step by step, outdoing it if possible at every stage.

We are thus driven to the conclusion that Jerijah is an intruder; his sub-paragraph was perhaps inserted to serve the polemical purposes of a faction at some point in the course of Israel's history. It can scarcely reflect a change in the actual political scene, because Transjordan did not long remain under the control of Jerusalem (where these archives were presumably kept). One can only suppose that, at the time the insertion was made, Hashabiah's control of Hebronite business west of the Jordan was too well known a fact of history for this area to be divided; so the Jerijahites had to be satisfied with a fictitious territory in the east, and all the kudos the author could heap upon them. At the same time, perhaps, Hashabiah's domain was limited to "westward of the Jordan," and the number of his brethren may then have been entered. Large round numbers are often a sign of late date, and there are no other such figures in the rest of this genealogy, vv.23-30<21>.

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20. One might imagine that Jerijah's family was the only one to operate east of the Jordan, filling all the roles shared in the west by the Amramites and Izharites, Hashabiah's family and no doubt the Uzzielites; and that is why they had comprehensive powers (and stronger numbers). But the pattern of the paragraph is against this; it is clear that vv.31f. are modelled on v.30.

21. Rothstein (in his commentary, *ad loc.*) also would omit vv.31f. as secondary, together with "westward of the Jordan" in v.30. Rudolph (commentary, p.179) feels (with some

Embedded in v.31 is a parenthesis about the finding of certain people at Jazer in the fortieth year of David's reign. The sentence is quite distinct from its context in style and content. As one cannot imagine an editor inventing this scrap of information, it is likely to be a fragment of an authentic tradition or archive, inserted originally as a marginal comment. However, it is not clear precisely where the parenthesis begins. The masoretic punctuation yields the translation given above. But substantial arguments may be marshalled for making the break earlier, so that the beginning of the verse will read: "Of the Hebronites, Jerijah was the chief. (Of the Hebronites, by their families and fathers' houses: in the fortieth year . . .)." These arguments may be summarised as follows:

(a) It is intolerable to read "of the Hebronites" twice within four Hebrew words in the same sentence.

(b) With the masoretic pointing, there is no antecedent for the expression "among them" in v.31b.

(c) Unless the parenthesis includes some mention of the Hebronites, there is no good reason why it should have been inserted here. The mere reference to "men of ability" is too vague; besides, the expression גִּבּוֹרֵי חַיִל of v.31 has a different connotation from the בְּנֵי חַיִל of vv.30,32. Taken on its own, the phrase in v.31 would more naturally mean 'hero', especially when (as here) in a Davidic context.

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justification) that this does not solve all the difficulties, and suggests that Rothstein has "fallen victim to his two-strand theory of Chronicles."

(d) There is another reference to 'fathers' houses' in v.32.

(e) When thus altered, the parenthesis begins with an abbreviated form of the formula used repeatedly in Num.i,20ff. to introduce the numbers of the various tribes. Similar phrases are found in various genealogical contexts in 1 Chr.vii.4,9; viii.28; ix.9,34.

It is therefore not surprising that most modern commentators move the athnah from the sixth to the third Hebrew word of v.31<22>. However, the result is not altogether satisfactory, since v.31b is not a piece of genealogy but a piece of history. It is possible that the annotator found the sentence embedded in genealogical material, and that he took the title of the paragraph as well as the historical fragment for his marginal note. It can not be excluded that the text may be corrupt; we have argued that vv.31f. are secondary, and a paragraph about the Uzzielites, which should have followed the account of the Hebronites, appears to have been lost. Or it may be that the masoretic text is correct. This would not be the only passage in which the Chronicler repeats words more frequently than appeals to our taste; and the annotator may have had some good reason, other than the mention of 'Hebronites' in the text of his quotation, for attaching it at this point.

On the other hand, it is conceivable that he is completely misapplying his quotation, which prima facie refers to warrior-

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22. E.g. Rudolph; Michaeli; NEB

heroes rather than mighty administrators. David might well be pleased to find heroes in Jazer. But can one really imagine him 'making enquiry' after his own administration, and discovering a strong provincial office? If then this note is not really about government officers, it does not belong in its present context; in which case it has no clear bearing on the 'Hebronites', unless we alter the punctuation so that they are named within this fragment of text. There are too many unanswered questions here for us to derive any certain information about Hebronites from this sentence; and its relevance to Levites is even more remote.

What then do we know about the 'Hebronites' of 1 Chr.xxvi? First, as we have just seen, we have an apparently authentic scrap of information<sup><23></sup> that, in the fortieth year of David's reign, men of great ability (or perhaps 'valour'), who were presumably if not explicitly Hebronites, were found at Jazer in Gilead. There is no indication within this fragment that the men were Levites.

Second, one (or possibly two) groups of Hebronite families, men of might or ability, exercised some sort of oversight of Israel,~ not only in Jerusalem, but throughout the country<sup><24></sup>. Their brethren the Amramites and the Izharites, and doubtless also the Uzzielites, had other comparable responsibilities. If our treatment of vv.30ff. has been on the right lines, it would appear that each group was originally described in one

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23. 1 Chr.xxvi.31b

24. Vv.30ff. Cf. 1 Chr.xxvii.25ff.

sentence. We are thus told quite simply that the Izharites were appointed as "officers and judges" (RSV; NEB "clerks and magistrates") for "outside duties," i.e. presumably to serve in the provinces. The text concerning Amram has been expanded, because it touched on the cultic sphere in which the Chronicler was interested; at the same time, part of the material, probably including the original sentence, has been lost. It appears however that the Amramites had something to do with the treasury; since the other two extant groups worked in the provinces, we may surmise that they too were provincial revenue officials rather than members of the Jerusalem civil service. What field then was left for the Hebronites, alongside the financial and judicial responsibilities of their brethren? We are told (v.30) that their concern was "all the work (מלאכה) of Yahweh" and "the service (עבד) of the king." This sounds like the civil levy, the labour force. מלאכה is a general word for work of any kind, including agriculture<sup><25></sup> and public buildings<sup><26></sup>. עבד can carry a similar range of meanings, but is particularly associated with the service of captives or subjects<sup><27></sup> (and, most frequently of all in the later literature, with the liturgical service of God, especially by the priests and Levites<sup><28></sup>). The importance of the compulsory

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25. 1 Chr.xxvii.26

26. 1 Ki.v.30 etc. (Temple); Neh.iv.5 etc. (walls of Jerusalem)

27. E.g. Ex.i.14; v.11; Dt.xxvi.6; 1 Ki.xii.4; and NB.

2 Chr.xii.8. For the more usual use in Chr., see e.g.

1 Chr.xxiii.24,28,32; xxviii 13, etc.

28. It is perhaps a sign of the early date of this verse, that the word which later became a technical term of the cult is here attached to the king and not to God. In v.32, both the words for 'work' are replaced by the colourless



labour force in the ancient world, and in Solomon's economy in particular, needs no emphasis here<sup>29</sup>. Its officers could well stand alongside the inspectors of revenue and the magistracy, in responsibility and dignity. For the sake of completeness, we may add that one broad area of administration remains to be covered: the military. This might perhaps be the sphere of the Uzzielites. We are to some extent confirmed in this conjecture by the fact that, after the passage on the Hebronites, the next subject in 1 Chr. is the organisation of the army. This material no doubt displaced the original brief notice about the Uzzielites, with which it would be incompatible.

Third: although there is no indication within the text we have been considering, vv.23-32, that the Amramites, Izharites, Hebronites and Uzzielites were Levites, the passage now stands appended to the Chronicler's description of the duties and relationships of the Levite families, which runs from ch.xxiii to ch.xxvi. In a number of other places, also, the Hebronites and their brethren are represented as sons of Kohath, son of Levi<sup>30</sup>. This genealogy does not appear before P, and it is not easy to guess how long before the fifth century it may have originated. Three pieces of evidence suggest a fairly late date:

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dbr. This strengthens the view that the verse is mere theoretical politics of a later age, unfounded on hard fact. The author claims for Jerijah the kudos of exalted office, without the stigma of a definite and unpopular area of responsibility.

29. Cf. 1 Ki.ix.15

30. Ex.vi.18; Num.iii.19,27; 1 Chr.vi.2,18; xxiii.12ff.

(a) There are in Chronicles two other lines of descendants of Kohath<31>, neither of them mentioning Hebron and his brethren. Presumably the genealogies were not yet fully digested and correlated.

(b) Where they appear in a historical context, the 'Hebronite' genealogies are associated with the service of the Tabernacle in the wilderness<32>, or of David's arrangements for the Temple<33>, which have no place in pre-exilic literature.

(c) In Num.xxvi.58, the 'families of Levi' are given as Libnite, Hebronite, Mahlite, Mushite and Korahite. Being isolated from its context and contrary to the later pattern, this text appears to be the sole vestige of an earlier stage in the tradition<34>. It is not possible to put a date to this verse<35>. However, it serves to confirm that the more normal grouping is an arbitrary construction,- an expression in genealogical form, perhaps, of the relation between departments of the administration. The fact that the names are given in group form, 'Amramites', 'Izharites', 'Hebronites', (and not 'sons of Amram', etc.), is consonant with their representing

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31. 1 Chr.vi.22ff., 33ff.

32. Num.iii.19,27; and perhaps Ex.vi.18

33. 1 Chr.xxiii.12ff.

34. K. M<sup>u</sup>hlenbrink, 'Die levitischen Überlieferungen des Alten Testaments', ZAW 52, 1934, pp.191ff.

35. M<sup>u</sup>hlenbrink, op.cit., associates Num.xxvi.58 with the material of xxvi.5-51, which Noth dates to the pre-monarchic period. The resemblance amounts to little more than this, that both lists contain place-names (e.g. Gilead, v.29; Shechem, v.31; Hebron, v.58). This is far from conclusive. And even if the relationship between the basic elements of the lists were granted, it would need to be shown in addition that the introduction to v.58, "these are the families of Levi", was attached to it at an early date, before we could draw conclusions from the verse about the early constitution of Levi.

non-genealogical associations. It is noteworthy that in 1 Chr.xxvi.29 and 30, the only verses preserving the pure form of entry in this list, the group (or professional?) name is followed immediately by that of an individual paterfamilias; no attempt is made to show a natural relationship between the two.

We can therefore conclude that a fair case has been made for the existence of a group of civil servants called 'Hebronites' at an early period; although the evidence<sup><36></sup> that they existed in David's time is not so clear as we should wish. There is no difficulty in supposing that they had a post at Jazer, if they operated under the united monarchy. It is not unreasonable to assume that a basic administrative structure of this type, covering revenue, justice, labour and military service throughout Israel, should have been set up by David; and it may be more unfortunate than surprising that we do not hear of it elsewhere. It is equally a matter for conjecture whether there was any substantial connection between the 'Hebronites' and the town of Hebron. The parallel branches of the civil service bore personal names, Amram, Izhar and Uzziel; perhaps 'the Hebronite' had been the popular name of one of the first and most notorious levy-masters<sup><37></sup>. It is in any case difficult to imagine

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36. 1 Chr.xxvi.31. Notice also vv. 26-28, which seem to imply that the Amramites were active in David's time. We can not however be confident of the age of this tradition.
37. It is tempting to imagine that there might have been some etymological connection between the term 'Hebronite' in this context and the root of 'apr, Habiru. This root may no longer have been widely current in the Fertile Crescent, but it may well have lingered in special usages in some

that a major section of the imperial administration was staffed exclusively, or predominantly, from the aristocracy of a single town. Finally, none of the evidence connecting these 'Hebronites' with the tribe of Levi can be traced with any degree of probability to a period before the exile. It is found only in P and Chronicles. It is open to conjecture how they came to take their place in the tribal genealogy. One may imagine a true tradition preserved for centuries in the dark; or one may look at the emphasis the Chronicler lays on the cultic responsibilities of the Amramites<sup><38></sup>, and suppose that he inferred from them that these officials and their brethren must be Levites. In the same way, he made Samuel a Levite; after the exile, it was inconceivable that those appointed to handle sacred things should be of any other tribe. And no doubt the priestly writers<sup><39></sup> had reached the same conclusion in a similar manner.

So we come at last with regret to the conclusion that Mazar's thesis will not stand. While we may agree that the 'Hebronites' and their brethren held administrative posts in

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places. Its area of meaning is broad, and includes what we seem to have here: the labour force raised to work public estates and construct major buildings. The "Hebronites, men of might" would be the officers responsible for this force. The connection would however be philologically difficult. F. F. Bruce rejects the proposal that both 'Habiru' and 'Hebron' be derived from the same root hbr = 'confederate', on the ground that the initial radical of the former is intrinsically 'h', as is shown both by the Egyptian form 'apr' and the probable Hebrew derivative 'bri' (Archaeology and Old Testament Study, ed. D. Winton Thomas, Oxford, 1967, pp.14f.)

38. 1 Chr.xxvi.24ff.

39. Cf.Ex.vi.18; Num.iii.19,27

provincial cities, we can not allow that they followed within recognisable distance the Egyptian pattern, at least as it is set out by Alt<sup>40</sup>. There is no sufficient evidence that they were considered to be Levites in David's time; and none at all, that they were typical of the occupants of the 'Levite cities'.

## 2. Maier's Reconstruction

J. Maier<sup>41</sup> follows a line not unlike Mazar's. He doubts whether there ever was a secular tribe of Levi; Jdg.xviif., he believes, show the Levite as a member of a social rather than an ethnic group<sup>42</sup>. How then did 'Levi' come to be treated as a tribe, linked (in conduct and fate) with Simeon? And what part did the Levites play in early Israelite history?

The Levite of Jdg.xviif. came from Bethlehem, not far from the area of Simeon; not far, either, from where David began his career. By Saul's time, Simeon was no longer recognisable as a distinct tribe. No doubt this was because it had been harassed by the Philistines, whose headquarters were uncomfortably close. If so, no doubt many Simeonites would be ready to join such a leader as David in the hope of

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40. 'Ägyptische Tempel', K.S. I pp.216ff.

41. 'Zur Geschichte des Bundesgedankens und zur Rolle der Leviten in der politischen und religiösen Geschichte des alten Israel', Judaica 25, 1969, pp.222-228; cf. also his 'Bemerkungen zur Fachsprache und Religionspolitik im Königreich Juda', Judaica 26, 1970, pp.89ff.

42. Cf. also the arguments of Nielsen and Gunneweg (see above, pp.14ff.)

improving their position. If the Levites were concentrated in the same area, no doubt they too would be ready to support him. Indeed, it is not impossible that David's origins lay among this group. This would make it the more natural that 'Levite' should come to be a general term for David's supporters.

The cult of Yahweh was from the start a major element in David's policy<sup>43</sup>. Its supporters in his party must have been heirs of traditions long established in South Judah, received perhaps initially from the Moses group during their stay at Kadesh<sup>44</sup>. As David gained control of Israel, his priests of Yahweh were spread over the land. In course of time, their offices became hereditary, and they were 'tribally' organised; though they differed from the other tribes in being dispersed throughout the kingdom. They were of particular importance to David while he was consolidating his position; although the list of 'Levite cities' in its present form must be dated later in David's reign, or even in Solomon's, it is rooted (on Maier's view) in this early period. These Levites are to be conceived as acting not only as priests but also as administrative and legal officers, and teachers. As a landless professional class, they were 'sojourners', whose great privileges depended on the royal law - the same law which maintained the right of the widow and orphan, with whom the Levites are grouped in Deuteronomy. This dependance on the crown was both a strength and a weakness. When the kingdom

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43. Cf. J. Maier, Das altisraelitischen Ladeheiligtum, Berlin, 1965, pp.60ff.; H. Schmid, Mose, Berlin, 1968

44. See ch. I, p.16.

was divided, Jeroboam naturally expelled the Levites from his realm, as partisans of the Davidic dynasty<45>. And in Judah, their fortunes rose and fell according to the policy of the current king. Tensions arose even before the end of David's reign, because by then their religious fanaticism conflicted with political common sense. So criticism of their violent methods began to come into the open, e.g. in the 'Blessing of Jacob' and in the story of the 'ordination' of the Levites in Ex.xxxii.25-29. The account of the dealings with Shechem, Gen.xxxiv, is particularly interesting because, as Maier sees it, it exhibits two strands side by side: an E version, within the Levite tradition, showing the attack as made by all the sons of Israel in concert; and a J version, in which Simeon and Levi alone are responsible, and it is a cause of grief and concern to their father.

This reconstruction is in many ways attractive; it offers an illuminating picture of the development of the tribe of Levi, and has the great merit of accounting for the evidence about the Levites in both the 'B' and the 'C' strata of Deuteronomy<46>. However, it seems to spring in large part from Maier's imagination. His point of departure, and indeed his principal evidence, seems to be his interpretation of Gen.xlix.5b: "Means of violent injustice are their storehouses" (or "livings")<47>. He takes mkrh as a priestly technical

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45. This is Maier's interpretation of 1 Ki.xii.31ff.

46. It remains remarkable that the two blocks of material, lying next to each other in Deuteronomy, should show such different emphases.

47. Maier, 'Bemerkungen', pp.89ff., esp. p.91.

term for the depot to which the taxes of a particular area are to be brought; a meaning possibly extended, in time, to cover the tax district farmed by a particular group of Levites. This is a fair step from the root meaning of krh, which seems to be 'dig', hence (for Maier) 'store-pit'<48>. The following clauses give general support to the picture of Simeon and Levi as violent and aggressive men, but do not contribute any particular data to Maier's thesis; unless perhaps v.6a breathes a cultic atmosphere. As far as the closing words of the oracle are concerned, we may agree with Maier that Levi may originally have been 'scattered' because of their official function - or for some other good reason - and that it was only subsequently interpreted as a curse. All that we can then draw from the verse is that, some time during the monarchy, Levi had a reputation for violence, which was shared by Simeon.

The other props of Maier's hypothesis are little more secure. We have inclined to the view that Levi was at one stage a normal, secular tribe, for which its association with Simeon in Gen.xxxiv and xlix provides a strong argument<49>. The 'Levite' strand in Jdg.xviif. seems to be a late addition<50>; and Maier makes no reference to Jdg.xixf. The list of 'Levite cities' gives no indication of any administrative function; indeed, as we have pointed out, the towns are strangely distributed for such a purpose. We may freely concede that

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48. Cf. Gunkel, Genesis, 6th ed. Göttingen, 1964, pp.479f. In Ezekiel, a differently pointed form means 'home town', 'origin': Ez.xvi.3; xxi.35(30); xxix.14

49. See above, p.18.

50. See above, pp.42ff.



there is very little evidence of any sort for the Levites in this period. What there is, Maier seems to have handled somewhat freely; and as we cannot be happy with his interpretations, the edifice he has built on them can not enjoy our confidence.

### 3. Haran's analysis

In his 'Studies in the Account of the Levitical Cities' <51>, M. Haran attempts a completely fresh approach to the problem. To begin with, he makes three general points about the cities. First, he emphasizes the difference between the Levites' tenure of their cities and the meadows immediately around them, and the other tribes' possession of cities and their surrounding villages, i.e. farms and farm land. The contrast is made explicit in Jo.xxi.11f., where we read how the Aaronite Levites were to have the city of Hebron and its meadows, but its fields and villages were to remain the possession of Caleb (Cf. 1 Chr.vi.40f.) Elsewhere in the chapter, and in 1 Chr.vi.42ff., we simply read regularly of Levite cities "with their pasture lands" whereas earlier in Joshua (e.g. ch.xv.20ff.) we see the other tribes given "cities with their villages." The law of Jubilee <52> shows that the basic possession and source of livelihood of the normal Israelite was his farm land, which was not allowed to be permanently sold; in case of financial necessity, it could in effect be let out for the remaining years of the jubilee period. The Levite had no such land,

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51. JBL 80, 1961, pp.45-54, 156-165

52. Lev.xxv.8ff.; cf. esp. vv.23,25ff.,32ff.

and needed some other kind of security. So the legislation provided that, in his case, his house in the city came under the same provisions as another man's fields; and the pastures, being common, could not be sold at all. "The code of the Levitical cities is intended to protect them (the Levites) from final dispossession, to safeguard their insecure existence in their cities, living as they do, according to P, on votive offerings!"<53>

Second, he points out that the Levite cities are referred to as dwellings only, and not as the places where the families officiated as priests. He supports his case by reference to Abiathar's and Jeremiah's holdings at the Levite city of Anathoth<54>, and conversely, by the absence of the shrines of Shiloh and Nob from the Levite city list. He argues<55> that the priests who ministered at Shiloh till its destruction, and subsequently at Nob, resided at Anathoth. The two sanctuaries are therefore not strictly 'cities of the priests and Levites', although a historian might loosely refer to Nob in such terms because of the large number of priests who officiated there<56>.- We may feel that Haran is here being too subtle; it is difficult to see any reason, parallel or solid evidence for 'commuting' like this before the Exile. Besides, if the source material of Jo.xxi had in fact mentioned local shrines, an exilic or later compiler would have been

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53. Op.cit., p.50

54. 1 Ki.ii.26; Jer.i.1; xxix.27; xxxii.7ff.

55. Pp.51f. of his article

56. 1 Sam.xxii.19

bound to expunge them in the interests of orthodoxy.

Haran's third point follows to some extent from the second. The Levite cities were not in themselves cities of refuge. Any altar might serve as asylum; the cities themselves cannot all be assumed to have possessed altars. He distinguishes the six 'cities of refuge' (as set out in Jo.xx), which alone gave asylum as cities; perhaps they owed their status to the possession of particularly important sanctuaries.

From these general considerations, Haran proceeds to set certain utopian features of the priestly<57> treatment of the Levite cities over against more realistic elements. Among the idealistic points he cites (i) the precise measurements given for the pasture-lands attached to each city, which are the same for all, regardless of the exigencies of local geography<58>; (ii) the connection with the laws of the Jubilee<59>; he finds no sign of any attempt to put them into effect, in the period with which we are concerned; (iii) the unhistorical presentation of these cities as the exclusive preserve of the Levites<60>, at least as regards the full possession of property there; and (iv) the sharp distinction between Aaronites and other Levites, which appears not really to have taken effect until after the exile. On the side of realism, he notes (i) the wide and irregular distribution of the Levite cities, which contrasts with the more compact and

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57. Haran has no hesitation in attributing Jo.xxi to P.

58. Num.xxxv.4f.

59. Lev.xv.32-34

60. Num.xxxv.2f.

logical arrangements devised by the abstract theorists, particularly Ezekiel<sup>61</sup>; (ii) the allocation of priests and Levites to towns without shrines, which would scarcely occur to an author unless it were given by the facts of history<sup>62</sup>; (iii) the allocation of cities outside the boundaries of the ideal Israel, east of the Jordan<sup>63</sup>; (iv) the relation of priests to Levites. In the city list they all appear to be on the same footing, there being roughly three times as many other Levites as Aaronites. In P's description of the Camp, on the other hand, the proportion of priests appears far lower - about half a dozen priests to over eight thousand adult male Levites!<sup>64</sup> - and we read that they are to be kept, presumably in an affluence superior to their subordinates', by a tithe of the Levites' tithe<sup>65</sup>. Haran also draws a sharp distinction in Ezekiel between the Levites' 'inheritance', i.e. farm property, and the priests' living space<sup>66</sup>. We may find the detailed arrangements too obscure to bear much weight, but it is clear enough that the two classes are treated separately and on a different basis.

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61. Ez.xlv.1-5; xlviii.8-14; cf. Num.i.50-53, etc.

62. See above, p.248. We may however wonder whether, in the time before Josiah, there was any town or substantial village without an altar of some sort.

63. Kaufmann attacks any too rigid view of the 'ideal Israel', suggesting that it was variously defined in different periods and for different purposes (The Biblical Account of the Conquest of Palestine, pp.46ff.)

64. Num.iii.1-4; iv.36,40,44

65. Num.xviii.21ff.

66. Ez.xlv.4f. Haran takes "possession" v.5, in its normal sense of a tribe's territory, and assumes that only a fraction of it is to be covered by the Levites' 'cities'. It is difficult to extract any such distinction between the nature of the priests' and Levites' holdings from xlviii.10ff.

This fourth item would be more impressive, if the whole distinction between priests and other Levites, as it is found in Jo.xxi, had not already been dismissed as 'utopian' (i.e., in this context, late and secondary). Haran's other observations are not unfamiliar to us, and lead to equally familiar conclusions: (a) at the time of the origin of the Levite city list, each town named in it did contain Levite inhabitants; but (b) these probably constituted no more than a small part of the total population, which would also include members of the Israelite tribe in whose territory the city lay, and in some cases "groups of non-Israelites, slaves or freemen, survivors of the conquered population"<sup>67</sup>. Haran hopes to draw out more positive conclusions on a future occasion.

He is however on the right lines in setting out to question the assumptions on which previous scholars had based their various attempts to solve the problem of the Levite cities. The reason he seems to have made little progress is perhaps that he did not press his questioning rigorously enough. He does well to point out that those, like Wellhausen, who assume that the list was based on more or less well known shrines are exceeding the evidence of the Old Testament. But this remains little more than a quibble, so long as we think we know what Levites were. If they were more or less priestly figures, then their towns were, at least to some extent, priestly places. After the exile we hear of 'dormitory villages'<sup>68</sup> for the

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67. Op.cit., p.165. Haran probably has in mind the cities listed in Jdg.i.27ff. as not completely subdued, e.g. Taanach, Ibleam, Nahalol, Rehob, Aijalon.

68. Neh.xii.28f.

singers, and of Levite duties not directly connected with the sanctuary<sup>69</sup>. But the weight of the historical and archaeological evidence indicates that the Levite cities must have been instituted by Solomon's reign, if the scheme was ever anything more than a pipe dream; and in that period we can scarcely conceive a 'priestly place' without an altar. However, as we observed in ch.I, the term 'Levite' is very little attested in Old Testament literature before Deuteronomy; and where it does appear, the contexts sometimes suggest that it did not have its later connotation. The Levite of Jdg.xix, for instance, is not shown ministering at an altar or expounding the Law. So we ought perhaps to be prepared to consider the question whether the Levite of the united monarchy may not have been very different from his namesake of Josiah's time and thereafter. Laying aside the picture presented by the deuteronomic and later writers, what is to be learnt about our Levites from the city lists? And does the information we may wring out of this unpromising material tally with a natural interpretation of the other early sources? If so, can we then draw any more satisfactory conclusions about the Levite cities' place in history than have been obtained hitherto?

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69. E.g. teaching the Law: Neh.viii.1ff., esp.v.7.

# 1. The relation of the cities to Israel

## (a) Treaties and 'Levite cities'

So far, our analysis has yielded little but negative results. From now onwards we can be more constructive. What have we to build with? First, we have the etymology of Levi, which, as we suggested in ch.I, may have a fundamental meaning "an associate." Second, it has repeatedly been observed that there are no 'Levite cities' in the central highlands of Judah and Ephraim, except Shechem and the four Benjamite cities just north of Jerusalem. The 'Levites' are therefore not a central group in Israel, but some sort of peripheral element. Third, the five central Levite cities have another character in common: Shechem and the Gibeonite group are the only towns whose inhabitants are called 'Hivite' in the Old Testament<sup><1></sup>. The precise significance of this name is still elusive, but it must indicate some sort of ethnic or political bond. This tends to tell against the view of Alt, Albright and others, that Shechem has no original place in the city list, in which the Gibeonite tetrapolis is firmly anchored<sup><2></sup>. Of Shechem

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1. Gen.xxxiv.2; Jo.ix.7. Cf. E. A. Speiser, 'The Hurrians', Cahiers d'Histoire Mondiale I.2, 1953, pp.322f.; S. Yeivin, 'The Benjaminite Settlement', IEJ 21, 1971, pp.141ff., esp. p.145

2. Gibeon is missing from 1 Chr.vi, no doubt by haplography,

we know (a) that it was the capital of the one substantial pre-Israelite kingdom in the hill country,- that of the notorious Labaya<3>; (b) that it was an important Canaanite city in the period of the conquest, with a somewhat ambiguous relationship with Israel<4>; and (c) that it was traditionally associated with 'covenants'. We may note here not only the name of the local god, 'the Lord of the Covenant'<5>, and the familiar fact that Shechem was the place where Joshua made, or renewed, Israel's covenant with Yahweh<6>; but also the emphasis in Gen.xxxiv on a solemn contract between Israel and Shechem, with the objects of trade and intermarriage. As the story now runs, the pact was made null and void from the outset by the precipitate action of prince Shechem seducing Jacob's daughter Dinah. However, Jacob himself does not seem to be convinced that justice was altogether on the side of the Israelites, when they took their vengeance by devastating and looting the city; in v.30 he addresses Simeon and Levi in sorrow, and his 'blessing' of them in xlix.5-7 amounts to a

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as it is followed by the very similar name 'Geba'. Cf. ch.III above.

3. This is evident from the Amarna correspondence; cf. letters 243f. and 253f., in J. A. Knudtzon, Die El-Amarna Tafeln, Leipzig, 1907-1915.
4. Cf. Amarna letter 287 ll.30f., where the sons of Labaya are said to have handed over territory to the Habiru; Gen.xxxiv, where relationships between Jacob's family and Shechem break down disastrously; and Jdg.viii.31; ix.1ff., where Abimelech, the son of Gideon's Shechemite concubine, seems to be distinctly more akin to the citizens than Gideon's other seventy sons. The statement in v.22, that "Abimelech ruled over Israel three years," is probably editorial; there is no other indication in the story that the citizens of Shechem were Israelite.
5. Baal-berith (Jdg.viii.33); El-berith (Jdg.ix.46)
6. Jo.xxiv



curse. So it may well be that the story of Dinah, who makes no significant appearance in any other context<sup><7></sup>, was introduced to show the breakdown of an agreement in a light favourable to the Israelites. It is quite possible that the breakdown was not in fact total or permanent. The action of Simeon and Levi is depicted as a plundering raid, rather than a lasting conquest<sup><8></sup>; and there is no account elsewhere of an Israelite annexation of Shechem. Subsequently, in Jdg.ix we see Shechem as a more or less independent petty state for a short period under Abimelech. In its next, and nearly its final appearance in the Old Testament, it is a city in Israel, where the tribes gather for Rehoboam's accession to the throne: another covenant-making situation<sup><9></sup>.

Of the other Levite cities in the central highlands, Gibeon is also famous for a contract made with Israel<sup><10></sup>. Once again there is an element in the circumstances which might well have made the contract void. The Gibeonites had dressed up as travellers from far away, and, the story would have us believe, it was under the impression that he was dealing with people from a remote country that Joshua made a covenant with them. When the fraud was discovered, however, the covenant was not nullified. The writer tries to give the impression that, on the one hand, the oath of peace was honoured, and on

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7. Gen.xxx.21 and xlv.15 are no more than inferences from this story. Cf. Nielsen, Shechem, p.246.

8. Gen.xxxiv.27-29. See e.g. H. H. Rowley, From Joseph to Joshua, pp.113f.; Nielsen, op.cit., pp.264f.

9. 1 Ki.xii.1, cf.2 Chr.x.1

10. Jo.ix.3ff.

the other, the divine command to take complete possession of the promised land was not disobeyed. The Gibeonites were allowed to live, but as serfs, or slaves, to do the menial work for the altar of Yahweh. So it seems that, where the Shechem story was an attempt to throw the blame for a violent clash between the two parties on to the sons of Hamor, Jo. ix is an effort to escape the embarrassment created by the tradition of a covenant between Gibeon and Israel. Both covenants may perhaps be dated within the same period, in spite of the fact that the one is attributed to Jacob and the other to Joshua. Each story is independent of its context, and refers to a situation within the framework of the Israelite settlement. This is really presupposed by Gen. xxxiv; what trade and marriage agreement would the Shechemites have wanted to make, if they had not viewed the Israelites as at least potentially permanent neighbours<sup><11></sup>? And finally, both cities were accepted as fully Israelite under the united monarchy<sup><12></sup>. Shechem would have been the site of Rehoboam's accession; Gibeon played its part in equipping Solomon for the throne, when he received his endowment with divine wisdom there<sup><13></sup>. With these we may perhaps compare Hebron, the scene of David's first coronation and of his covenant with Israel<sup><14></sup>. We can scarcely find such royal associations for the whole list of

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11. Gen. xxxiv. 21

12. Saul appears to have had less satisfactory relations with Gibeon: 2 Sam. xxi. 2

13. 1 Ki. iii. 4-14; cf. 2 Chr. i. 3-13

14. David was not only anointed king of Judah at Hebron (2 Sam. ii. 4); it was there that he made a covenant before Yahweh with all the tribes of Israel. On the ancient covenant tradition of Hebron see R. E. Clements, Abraham and David (London, 1967), ch. IV.

Levite cities. But it might be worth enquiring whether the rest of the list shared some of the other features, - some sort of covenant with Israel, the avoidance of conquest, and the persistence of a non-Israelite population<15>.

(b) The unconquered cities of Jdg.i

In the book of Joshua and the first chapter of Judges there are notes of towns which were not captured by Israel in the earlier stages of the conquest<16>. These notes are apparently fragmentary, and we should not look to them for a complete list of unconquered places<17>. But of the cities that are mentioned, how many appear in the Levite list? There is a substantial overlap, but the correspondence is far from complete. Any attempt to reduce the discrepancy is open to the charge of special pleading. However, the matter justifies further investigation. We notice at once that, of the seven towns whose inhabitants Asher did not drive out<18>, only Rehob, one of the most southerly, is listed as Levite<19>; similarly, Beth-shemesh and Beth-anath, which Naphtali failed to subdue, seem to be north of the field covered by Jo.xxi<20>.

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15. On Hebron's 'avoidance of conquest' see below, pp.261f.

16. Jo.xv.14,63; xvi.10; xvii.11-13; Jdg.i.21,27-36.

17. But see below, n.33

18. Jdg.i.31

19. On the territory of Asher see below, pp.270ff. So much uncertainty surrounds this tribe that it is impossible to draw firm conclusions about its 'Levite' cities.

20. One can only speculate whether the list of Levite cities once extended as far north as the list in Jdg.i, or whether it was from the start more limited. In the former case, its northern parts may have been pruned by the same hand as organised it into four cities from each of the twelve tribes. But see below, pp.268ff., 275ff.

Of the two unconquered towns in Zebulun, Nahalol appears in Jo.xxi (though not in 1 Chr.vi), and it is possible that Kartah in Jo.xxi may be a textual variant of the other, Kitron<sup>21</sup>. Of the five towns in Manasseh listed in Jdg.i.27, Taanach and Ibleam are 'Levite cities' (the latter omitted in error from Jo.xxi). Dor is on the coast, perhaps outside the 'Levite' area<sup>22</sup>; but it is difficult to draw a line between Taanach and Megiddo, or between Ibleam and Beth-shan. It has been suggested that one or the other of each pair would be the dominant partner, the roles changing from period to period. This is plausible, but not easy to demonstrate. Yeivin and Mazar conclude from archaeological evidence that Megiddo was occupied by Israelites for a period in the 12th-11th centuries; it appears that both this site and Taanach were subsequently deserted for a time<sup>23</sup>. But the excavators do not speak with assurance or unanimity. Schofield writes of the level in question: "The Stratum VI city, poorly built, remained Canaanite, as its pottery and cult objects show"<sup>24</sup>. It is

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21. Jdg.i.30; Jo.xxi.34, but not in 1 Chr.vi. Aharoni accepts the equation of Kitron with Kattath, which precedes Nahalol in Jo.xix.15 (Land of the Bible, p.212). The names are קרתה; קטת; קטרון. There seems to be a measure of textual confusion over the names of towns in this area. See above, pp.160ff..
22. But cf. 'Hammath-dor', Jo.xxi.32.
23. B. Mazar (Maisler), 'The Stratification of Tell Abu Huwam on the Bay of Acre', BASOR 124, 1951, p.25; BIES 16, 1952, p.19; S. Yeivin, The Israelite Conquest of Canaan, pp.60-62
24. J. N. Schofield, art. 'Megiddo', in Archaeology and Old Testament Study, p.321. Whereas Yeivin (loc.cit.) reports the excavators as asserting that no traces of violent destruction have been found, to mark the end of any of the phases of Strata VII-V, Schofield speaks of a 'fierce burning' at the end of VIA, about 1100 B.C.

however clear from the Biblical records that Taanach was an important Canaanite city in the period of the Judges<sup><25></sup>; and that later it was somewhat eclipsed by Megiddo, which Solomon established as a garrison town, together with Hazor and Gezer<sup><26></sup>. These others were both places of historical importance, which had fallen into insignificance as the result of military disaster - recent in the one case, remote in the other. It is not unlikely that Megiddo was in a somewhat similar position. Then, either the name has been introduced in Jdg.i by an editor who knew Megiddo as, in his own time, the dominant partner of Taanach (so that whatever Taanach achieved would apply a fortiori to Megiddo); or, for what reasons we can only conjecture, the place was originally in the Levite city list, but fell into obscurity in the later Conquest period, and lost whatever privileges and 'Levite status' it had acquired. That such loss of 'Levite status' could not be solely attributed to Solomon's re-founding of the city, is shown by the fact that Gezer, another 'chariot city', is listed in Jo.xxi<sup><27></sup>. Unlike Hazor and Megiddo, it had only recently lost its prosperity, when it was sacked by Pharaoh, at the beginning of Solomon's reign; by which time its place in the list was secure.

Unlike these towns, Beth-shan maintained its importance throughout the latter half of the second millennium. It is attested for Jo.xxi by LXX A, but without further support;

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25. Jdg.i.27; v.19

26. 1 Ki.ix.15

27. V.21, cf. 1 Chr.vi.52

the reading is probably no more than a guess. The city had a special position; it was the major garrison post in the area, first for Egypt, and subsequently for the Philistines, who apparently held it in the time of Saul<sup>28</sup>. So it was presumably not under a normal Canaanite regime at the time of the Israelite conquest, and would therefore not be a party to the kind of treaty we envisage.

Gezer, which has already been mentioned as a Levite city, is the only place listed in Jdg.i as unconquered by Ephraim<sup>29</sup>. Jerusalem is mentioned, in a much discussed verse, as not taken by Benjamin<sup>30</sup>; it is not in the Levite list. When it was captured by David, and turned into a royal possession, it would lose any 'allied' status it might earlier have enjoyed. And the final notice in Jdg.i tells how the 'Amorites' kept the upper hand in the western territory of Dan (and particularly in Har-heres, Aijalon and Shaalbim), until they were overcome by the house of Joseph<sup>31</sup>. This presumably took place not long before the monarchy, or even in its early years. It is not unreasonable to suppose that the major cities, at least, would before then have worked out a modus vivendi with the neighbouring Israelites. Aharoni quotes Abel to the effect that Har-heres may represent Beth-shemesh<sup>32</sup>, a Levite city attributed to Judah and Simeon. Aijalon is listed as a Levite

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28. 1 Sam. xxi. 10, 12

29. V. 29

30. V. 21. The reference to the capture of Jerusalem by Judah (v. 8) is obscure.

31. Vv. 34f.

32. The Land of the Bible, p. 214; cf. F. M. Abel, Géographie de la Palestine II, Paris, 1938, pp. 282, 343

city of Dan; Shaalbim, between Aijalon and Gezer, does not appear in the Levite list.

So, of the dozen or so 'unconquered' cities in the 'Levite' area, about two-thirds are listed as 'Levite cities'. For most of the rest, we have been able to suggest reasons why they did not fall into the 'Levite' category. If we knew more of the circumstances of the time, no doubt it would be possible to give a fully satisfactory explanation of every case. In view of our ignorance of so many of the features of the political situation leading up to the monarchy, what we have found is perhaps a sufficiently close correlation<sup><33></sup>.

But Jdg.i.27ff. makes no mention of places south of Jerusalem or east of the Jordan. As far as the Levite cities of Reuben, Gad and eastern Manasseh are concerned, we have already suggested that they may be, in whole or in large part, late additions to the list<sup><34></sup>. But what of the southern group? Earlier in Jdg.i we read of the capture of Hebron, Debir and Hormah. Of these, the first two are 'Levite'. Hormah was taken and destroyed by the Israelite tribes of Judah and Simeon, so it would naturally not feature in such a list of 'allied' or 'associated' cities as we have in mind. But what of the other two, also captured (as the story now runs) by Judah? In the case of Debir, we notice that the actual

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33. Aharoni, op.cit., p.233 points out that the notes of unconquered cities relate to the same six northern tribes whose boundaries are given in Joshua. He roots both documents in a 'covenant of the northern tribes' before the time of Saul.

34. See above, pp.148ff..

story of its capture concerns not Judah but Caleb, Othniel and Kenaz (the last clearly the eponymous ancestor of the Kenizzites).

These represent three of the clans who inhabited the southern part of the hill country of Judah, roughly from Hebron southwards, which were in course of time assimilated into the tribe of Judah<sup><35></sup>. Viewed in this light, it becomes significant that the tradition is so insistent that Hebron was given to Caleb, rather than to Judah or Simeon<sup><36></sup>. It would appear that these two conquest stories belong primarily to the clans, and were only taken into Israelite tradition when the clans were adopted into Judah. There is no indication that this 'adoption' was other than peaceful; no doubt it would involve some form of covenant, with the clans and with the more important of the cities in their territory. Such an agreement might well lie at the root of the 'Levite' status of so many cities in this area. This view accords well with the fact that none of them are in the homeland of the Israelite tribe of Judah, between Hebron and Jerusalem.

If we are at all on the right lines, the 'Levite cities' would then appear to be places that entered Israel not by conquest, but by some sort of covenant of association. If with Mendenhall<sup><37></sup> we see the 'conquest' largely in terms of a chain of revolutions by which the depressed classes overthrew

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35. See e.g. Alt, 'Bemerkungen', p.293; de Vaux, Histoire Ancienne d'Israël, pp.496ff.

36. Jo.xiv.13f.; xv.13f.; xxi.11f. cf. 1 Chr.vi.41(56); Jdg.i.20

37. 'The Hebrew Conquest of Palestine', Biblical Archaeologist 25, 1962, pp.66ff.



their Canaanite aristocracies, the 'Levite cities' will be places where the masters were able to make terms with the insurgents. If on the other hand we think in terms of an expansion of tribesmen through the hill country and thence into the plains<38>, we may still envisage some communities being able to avoid being completely overrun by entering into a form of agreement with the newcomers who now surrounded them<39>. It would then be no surprise to see Israel taking over the open country, the 'villages and fields', and limiting the lands of the 'associate' towns to a modest 'green belt'- if that is indeed what is meant by 'migrash'. And is it too fanciful, to see subscription to some version of the Decalogue as the normal form of this covenant? The first commandment, the demand to give prime allegiance to Yahweh, is particularly appropriate, since he was the god of the association. It is also the theme of Jo.xxiv, the 'covenant at Shechem'. Might this be in origin an account of the accession of Labaya's former capital to Israel? Or perhaps of the confirmation of Shechem's place in Israel, after a period of friction and uncertainty?<40>

One of the main characteristics of these 'associate' towns would be that their population continued substantially unchanged,

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38. Cf. Alt, 'Die Landnahme der Israeliten in Palästina', 1925, E.T. in Essays in Old Testament History and Religion, Oxford, 1966, pp.133-169; 'Erwägungen über die Landnahme der Israeliten in Palästina', 1939, K.S. I, 1953, pp.126-175.  
 39. Cf. M. Weippert, Settlement, pp.18ff.  
 40. Cf. the indications in Gen.xxxiv.

together with the magistrates and local officials. In course of time, their internal law would be assimilated in general to the ethos of Israel; their dealings with other cities in the Israelite league, and with foreigners, would from the outset be controlled by the law and central government of Israel, or of the Israelite tribes to which they were affiliated. Similarly, acceptance of Yahweh as supreme god might not initially revolutionise local cultic practice; though again, in course of time there would no doubt be a good deal of cross-fertilisation and standardisation. As an example of such influence at the highest level, we read of Solomon participating in the cult of Gibeon at the beginning of his reign<sup><41></sup>. Indeed, the Chronicler speaks of the tabernacle of Yahweh being set up there in David's time, and served by Zadok the priest of Israel<sup><42></sup>. Zadok himself is widely held to stem from the pre-Israelite priesthood of Jerusalem<sup><43></sup>.

The list of such confederate cities would be important in the period of the Judges, and would no doubt be preserved in one form or another at the central sanctuary, or wherever the records of inter-tribal relations were kept. By the time the monarchy was fully established, however, and the kingdom had been organised in administrative districts, the list would cease to have any practical value. The covenant of association

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41. 1 Ki.iv.4., etc.

42. 1 Chr.xvi.39.

43. See e.g. T. J. Meek, 'Aaronites and Zadokites', AJSL 45, 1929, pp.149ff.; K. Budde, 'Die Herkunft Sadoks', ZAW 52, 1934, pp.43-50; H. H. Rowley, 'Zadok and Nehushtan', JBL 58, 1939, pp.113ff.; R. de Vaux, Ancient Israel, E.T. London, 1961, pp.373f.

had been a substitute for, or extension of, the bond of blood and kinship which had cemented the tribes; but once the tribal league became a state, allegiance to the king, his law and his god became the chief marks of a citizen; his rights and status depended, in principle at least, no longer on his position in his family and tribe, and their pacts and feuds with other groups, but on the king's justice<sup><44></sup>. This is no doubt a great over-simplification. Such a radical change, for Israel, would not take place overnight. It appears that the list of associate cities needed to be kept up to date, perhaps until towards the end of David's reign. Thereafter the record, like that of the tribal boundaries, would be preserved in the national archives, where it was accessible to antiquarians of the sixth century.

(c) The 'Levite' of Jdg.xixf.

This interpretation of the 'cities of the Levites' receives some support from the final chapters of Judges. We have seen above that the 'Levite' of Jdg.xviif. is probably a late importation. But there is no such reason to suspect the following story, although - or rather, because - the term 'Levite' is used only twice, and in passing<sup><45></sup>. It seems to carry no special emphasis, and although it looks as if it could easily be dispensed with in both the places where it

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44. This is one of the reasons for introducing the story of Solomon's administration of justice, 1 Ki.iii.16-28. Cf. also David, 2 Sam.xv.2; and note the parallel with the royal figure of Moses, Ex.xviii.13ff.

45. xix.1; xx.4

appears, there is no obvious reason why any late hand should have introduced it<sup><46></sup>. There is no suggestion that the Levite was a man of God, or that he enjoyed any priestly status<sup><47></sup>. Nor is there in this story any verse which points a Levite moral, such as we found in xvii,13. In fact, there is nothing whatsoever about this Levite, except the name, to associate him with those of whom P and the Chronicler wrote. The difference is emphasised by the phrase used in xix,1 and xx,4, וְיָבִין, which appears nowhere else in the Bible. May we infer that at the time the story was composed the term was normally collective, or applied to such groups as cities, so that it had to be made very plain when a single member was meant?

It is not at all likely that 'Levi' here stands for the old secular tribe<sup><48></sup>. If 'Levi' were here a tribe like the other tribes, then surely the Levite's fellow-tribesmen would have taken the lead in avenging their brother. It would have been their moral and legal duty. At the very least some excuse should have been offered for their failure to take the honourable course; it might have been said, for instance, that they were too few to take on Benjamin alone, and therefore

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46. Gunneweg, op.cit. p.23 and n.4

47. The cutting up of the body, and sending the parts round to the tribes, may be in some sense a sacral act; however, it has nothing to do with priestly or Levite status. Saul did something very similar (1 Sam.xi.7), and there is no suggestion that he was a Levite.

In xix,18, for וְיָבִין read וְיָבִין, with LXX; Moore, Judges, p.416; BH; F. R. Burney, The Book of Judges, p.466; Nielsen, Shechem, p.273; RSV; Myers, Interpreter's Bible II p.812; NEB; Gunneweg, op.cit. p.24 n.1

48. As in Gen.xxxiv.25,30; xlix.5

they invoked the other tribes. But in fact no tribe of Levi makes any appearance on the scene whatsoever. When the question arises, who is to attack Benjamin first, there is no obvious answer; it is left to an oracle to select Judah<49>.

The first half of this story shows how violation of the personal rights of a Levite could lead to disciplinary action on the largest scale within the framework of Israel. If there were any question of his special sacrosanctity, as a man of God, that would surely be brought out in the narrative<50>. As it is, the point seems to be that, although he is not a full member of a tribe, as an 'associate' he is entitled to the full benefits of Israelite justice. This interpretation is not only attractive in itself, but gives a telling reason for the preservation of Jdg.xix-xx in Israel's early years: the position of an individual 'associate' in an Israelite city needed to be established and illustrated. If we do not accept this interpretation, the tale of the outrage at Gibeah can be seen only as a long-drawn-out introduction to the aetiological story of the men of Benjamin and the girls of Jabesh-gilead

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49. Jdg.xx.18

50. Gunneweg, op.cit. pp.24ff. and references in n.4. He argues, however, that a Levite must have been a very special kind of person, in a special relation to the "Jahwe-Israel-Amphictyonie", to have an amphictyonic war fought on his behalf; although the nature and basis of this relationship does not emerge from the story. Perhaps the difficulty, of amphictyonic consequences from an individual's injury, has a simpler solution. The material of Jdg.xix-xxi was originally two (or more) separate stories, which have been combined, so as on the one hand to give a clear-cut reason, on an individual level, for a major conflict; and on the other, to point and emphasize the moral of the outrage-story by giving it consequences on the largest scale. The Levite belongs only to the first of these stories.

and Shiloh. It is true that the man's special position as a 'Levite' does not receive the emphasis we might expect. It may be that this aspect of the story tended to slip into the background in the final stages of editing, at a time when the term 'Levite' had changed its meaning and its original significance had been forgotten. Nevertheless, at two key points the man is shown to be a Levite: at his first appearance in the story<sup><51></sup>; and at his first appearance before the assembled tribes<sup><52></sup>. So he is known as a Levite both to the hearers of the tale, and to the other characters in it.

(d) The northern area

The most remarkable feature of the city list is, as we have said, its geographical distribution. As it stands, the main groups are in the northern half of Manasseh, and further north; in the southern half of Judah, down into the Negeb; in and around the western territory of Dan; together with a scattering of places in Transjordan, and the Hivite cities, Shechem and the Gibeonite tetrapolis. We may suspect that the eastern group has been added at a later stage<sup><53></sup>. There are no such reasons to doubt the northern and southern fringes. To the contrary, the note of 'unconquered cities' of Asher and Naphtali in Jdg.i.31ff. raises the question whether the 'Levite' list may not originally have extended to the neighbourhood of Tyre.

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51. Jdg.xix.1

52. xx.4

53. See above, pp.148ff..

Even without any such extension, the list seems to stretch well beyond the areas where Israel is known to have been active in the time of the Judges and of Saul. Can her 'sphere of influence' have extended so far, in the formative period of the list? To be sure, this region is well within the area of David's empire. But for these cities to be added to the list in his time, his activities here would have to include not only conquest but also the establishment of treaty relations with a number of towns; treaty relations, furthermore, of a type which was rapidly becoming obsolete. There is no positive evidence of any such arrangements, nor are they in themselves probable. The treaties David did make were with greater and more distant powers - Tyre<sup>54</sup>, Hamath<sup>55</sup>, and no doubt Egypt<sup>56</sup>. Besides, where we have records of covenants with listed cities, they are dated to the period of the conquest, or even to that of the patriarchs<sup>57</sup>. So it is likely that these northern cities were added to the list before David's wars. If the notes of unconquered cities in Jdg.i etc. are related to the list, as we have suggested, this likelihood is strengthened; because these passages are set in the period of the conquest or of the judges, and portray a time before David had consolidated the kingdom<sup>58</sup>.

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54. 2 Sam.v.11

55. 2 Sam.viii.9ff.

56. Cf. 1 Ki.iii.1

57. Gen.xxxiv; Jo.ix,xxiv. See also pp.261f. on the accession of the South Judahite clans.

58. A. Alt, 'The Settlement of the Israelites in Palestine', p.160 n.116.

We have very little information about the northern extent of Israel in those earlier days. There appears to be external evidence for a people called 'Asher' somewhere in the Galilee area from about 1300 B.C.<59> This would then be among the first of the groups which later became tribes of Israel, to make its mark in Palestine. Yeivin asserts that its name is related to the Canaanite deity (more familiar in its feminine form, Asherah), and points out that Gad, the other tribe presented by tradition as descended from Zilpah, also bears the name of a Canaanite divinity<60>. This must imply that Asher was an established tribe, settled in Canaan, before it joined the Israelite league. This had taken place by the time of the Song of Deborah, which complains that "Asher sat still at the coast of the sea" and did not join the battle<61>. Like the other early tribes, Reuben, Simeon and Levi, its importance seems to have declined as the Israelite settlement proceeded<62>. Its appearance in the Egyptian documents suggests that it had given its name to the whole of the hill country of Galilee. This provides the best explanation of a

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59. Text of first year of Seti I in J. Simons, Handbook for the Study of Egyptian Topographical Lists Relating to Western Asia, Leiden, 1937, p.147 no.4. S. Yeivin, The Israelite Conquest of Canaan, Leiden, 1971, p.23, vigorously defends the interpretation 'Asher' against Albright, 'Northwest-Semitic Names in a List of Egyptian Slaves', JAOS 74, 1954, pp.222-253, esp. pp.229-231, who prefers 'Assur'. The name recurs with a slightly different spelling on a monument of the 18th year of Ramesses II (Simons, p.162, no.8) and on Pap. Anastasi I (late 13th century) (text in J. B. Pritchard, Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament, Princeton, 1950, 2nd ed. 1955, p.258)

60. Yeivin, loc.cit., and p.19

61. Jdg.v.17

62. G. E. Wright, The Westminster Historical Atlas to the Bible, London, 1946, p.46b.



puzzling feature of the kingdom Saul's son inherited. According to 2 Sam.ii.9, it consisted of five regions, namely: "Gilead and the Ashurites and Jezreel and Ephraim and Benjamin and all Israel." 'Ashurites' (Assyrians) is impossible, and must be emended. Some have suggested 'Geshurites', east of the Sea of Chinnereth. They would be well placed geographically; but they enjoyed a treaty relation with David, and it is unlikely that they came under Saul's direct rule. So the reading 'Asherites' has been generally accepted<sup>63</sup>. By that time, Asher proper had been reduced to the western strip of its former territory, separated from Gilead and Jezreel by Naphtali and Zebulun. But we must suppose that the name could still be used as a general term for the Galilean hill country.

Aharoni maps this province as excluding almost all the territory of Asher as given in the book of Joshua, and indeed much of Naphtali<sup>64</sup>. In drawing the boundary to the east of the 'unconquered cities' of these tribes, he follows Alt, who had observed: "The statements of 2 Sam.ii.9 and Judges i clearly supplement one another: so far as we can see the areas they describe nowhere overlap."<sup>65</sup> If they are right, then the 'Levite cities' Abdon, Rehob and probably Mishal, as well as the places named in Jdg.i.31, were not only independent but outside the border of Israel. However, the sense of Jdg.i.32

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63. Cf. S. R. Driver, Notes on the Hebrew Text and Topography of the Books of Samuel, Oxford, 2nd ed. 1913, p.241; Alt, Landnahme, p.161 n.123; H. W. Hertzberg, Die Samuelbücher, 2nd ed. 1960, E.T. London, 1964, pp.249f.; Y. Aharoni, The Land of the Bible, p.256.

64. Aharoni, op.cit., p.256

65. Alt, loc.cit.

is surely that the Asherites did live in this very area, on good or at least tolerable terms with "the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land." They were on the coast at the time of the Song of Deborah; the boundary description in Jo.xix.24ff. includes a stretch of seaboard<sup>66</sup>; and in Solomon's time Naphtali was an important separate province, presumably occupying the area Aharoni had assigned in Saul's time to Asher. One must conclude that the Asherites proper, in this period, claimed and occupied the coastal district north of Carmel. On the other hand, it is more than likely that their effective occupation petered out less than half way to the northern end of their claimed 'possession'. Yeivin observes that practically all the towns listed in Jo.xix.24-31 lie between Carmel and the latitude of Achzib and Abdon<sup>67</sup>. Within this space are found all the 'Levite cities' of Asher, and all its 'unconquered cities' except Ahlab and Sidon. These are both problems, the one because it lies absurdly far to the north, and the other because it lies in the shadow of Tyre, which is mentioned as lying on Asher's boundary. If Ahlab was unconquered, surely Tyre should also be listed! One can only suggest the possibilities of misinterpretation, mis-identification, and textual error.

We conclude that in the time of Saul, and earlier, the tribe of Asher was in contact with the 'Levite cities' and most, if not all, of the 'unconquered cities' of its nominal

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66. Yeivin, op.cit., pp.254f.

67. Ibid.

territory; and we have the evidence of Jdg.i.32 for peaceful relations between them, which perhaps implies some kind of agreement or treaty. The same would no doubt be true of its younger neighbour Naphtali. It is perhaps probable that the agreements were originally made between the cities and the individual tribes, and were consolidated into a single Israelite list in the course of the formation of the Israelite federation, - possibly as late as David's time. In the case of Asher in particular, it is not unlikely that the original treaties were made before the 'tribe' had any political connection whatever with Israel. This history may have something to do with the imperfect correlation of the various city lists of Asher. There may well also be some textual corruption<sup>68</sup>.

(e) Summary

We may sum up thus the theme of this chapter so far: The 'cities of the Levites' appear to have nothing to do with priests or shrines. On the other hand, they include most of the towns notably connected in Israelite tradition with the making of covenants and pacts, and a large proportion of the places known to have withstood the earlier stages of the Conquest. To these may be added the clans of the south Judean

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68. If 'Sidon' is a corruption of 'Abdon', or both are derived from a third form, then all the 'Levite cities' of Asher are in Jo.xix.24ff. Of the seven places in Jdg.i.31, however, only four are in Jo.xix. In addition, either Ahlab or Helbah may be a variant form of Mehebel. Rehob, and possibly Abdon=Sidon, are the only towns in all three lists. BH suggests the easier emendation of Ebron (Jo.xix.28) to Abdon. This again ensures that the 'Levite cities' are all in Jo.xix, but it offers no solution of the problem of Sidon.

hill country, which were assimilated peacefully into Israel, together with the cities they controlled. The list may then in origin represent the cities which joined Israel by alliance rather than conquest. It is not etymologically difficult to derive the sense 'associate', 'ally', from the root of 'Levi'.

One result, however, is that we have no less than three distinct and unrelated meanings for 'Levi' in the Old Testament: (a) an early secular tribe, alongside Reuben and Simeon; (b) an 'associate'; (c) a member of the priestly or sub-priestly guild. The three usages belong to different periods. The tribes of Reuben, Simeon and Levi seem to have lost their identity long before the monarchy. The list of 'cities of the Levites' took its final form under David or Solomon, though no doubt it is rooted in the period of the Judges. And priestly Levites burst upon Biblical literature at about the time of the Exile; the freedom with which the term is then used in this sense is the only evidence that it had been long known, though not used by the early prophets or historians. Finally, a niche has to be found for the 'pauper Levites' of Dt.xii-xvi. It is reasonably clear, however, that they can not be related to the Levites of the city lists, which had been a dead letter for centuries before the book of Deuteronomy was composed.

Can we be sure that the lists did originally assign the cities to Levites? The term 'Levi' is scarcely mentioned in 1 Chr.vi.39-66(54-81); and while it occurs frequently enough in Jo.xxi, it is generally tied to one or other of the clans,

which as we have seen are a late addition to the list. In both books the list is set in a Levite context; but this means only that, by the time the books were compiled, after the exile, the cities were believed to have belonged to the priests and the rest of the 'tribe' of Temple ministers. This can never have been the case. The mistake would arise most naturally from such a change in the meaning of the term 'Levi' as we have suggested: the list of 'cities of the Levite allies' came to be read as giving the 'cities of the Levite priests'.

## 2. A further suggestion

A further possibility may however be considered. We have seen that the Levite cities in central Israel are elsewhere associated with the Hivites<sup>69</sup>. We may now observe that the Edomite borderlands in the south, and the Lebanon area in the north, are also spoken of as Hivite territory. For the north, the Biblical evidence is as good as we could reasonably hope. In Joshua, the allies of Jabin king of Hazor include "the Hivites under Hermon in the land of Mizpah."<sup>70</sup> In Judges, a list of "the nations which Yahweh left, to test Israel by them," includes "the Hivites who dwelt on Mount Lebanon, from Mount Baal-hermon as far as the entrance of Hamath," alongside the Sidonians<sup>71</sup>; and finally, the list of areas covered by David's census officers brackets "all the cities of the Hivites and Canaanites" with Sidon and Tyre<sup>72</sup>. We may also note

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69. Gen.xxxiv.2; Jo.ix.7; xi.19

70. Jo.xi.3 (but cf. LXX)

71. Jdg.iii.3

72. 2 Sam.xxiv.7

in passing the associated tradition that Israel did not conquer the Hivites, or at least did not burn their cities. Judges speaks of them, along with the Philistines and Canaanites, as being preserved by Yahweh to give later generations of Israel experience of war<73>; and in Joshua we read that "there was not a city that made peace with the people of Israel, except the Hivites, the inhabitants of Gibeon."<74>

It is rather more difficult to document the Hivite presence in the south. Gen.xxxvi.2 mentions Anah the son of Zibeon the Hivite; later in the chapter Zibeon and Anah appear as sons of Seir, or chiefs in the land of Seir<75>. But here they are regularly Horites, in line with a number of other passages which speak of Horites in Seir or Edom<76>. Since the time of Eduard Meyer it has been widely accepted that the Biblical Horites are identical with the Hurrians of the cuneiform and hieroglyphic inscriptions<77>. De Vaux has argued against

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73. Jdg.iii.1-6. The reference to intermarriage in v.6 is no doubt a detail added by the compiler on doctrinaire grounds, and not to be taken seriously as evidence.
74. Jo.xi.19. As it stands, the verse refers only to Gibeon. If this was the original intention, why is mention made of 'Hivites'? After the opening clause, "There was not a city that made peace with the people of Israel," it would have been both more logical and simpler to continue "except Gibeon." To the argument that "the Hivites, the inhabitants of Gibeon" means the whole Gibeonite tetrapolis, we can only reply, That is not what it says. It seems more natural to regard "the inhabitants of Gibeon" as an explanation mistakenly introduced by an editor, in the light of Jo.ix.
75. Vv.20-29
76. Gen.xiv.6; xxxvi.20ff.; Dt.ii.12,22. There is a good deal of inconsistency in the use of 'Horite' and 'Hivite' in the Bible texts. With MT of Gen.xxxiv.2, Num.xxii.29, Jo.ix.7, xi.3, cf. LXX. In addition, the "Avvim" of Dt.ii.23 and Jo.xiii are represented in LXX by Εἰθίοι = Hivites.
77. E. Meyer, Die Israeliten und ihre Nachbarstämme, Halle,

this that there is no extra-Biblical evidence for Hurrians ever settling so far south; Nelson Glueck's explorations in this area have produced no characteristic Hurrian material, and none of the personal names linked with this region in Gen.xxxvi are demonstrably Hurrian<78>. Blenkinsopp<79> replies that the type of settlement to be expected so far south, and so late in the period of Hurrian expansion, would not necessarily leave the same kind of traces as have been found further north, where in addition the archaeological exploration has been more thorough. The most substantial evidence may lie in the personal names related to the area. There are Hurrian parallels for names ending -zz-, like 'Perizzi'<80> and, in the southern region, 'Kenizzi'; and the names of the Anakim in the Hebron area are certainly non-Semitic and quite probably Hurrian<81>. Several scholars have challenged Moritz' claim that the personal and tribal names in Gen.xxxvi are most closely related to Arabic, and have suggested equally probable Hurrian connections<82>.

Blenkinsopp then turns to examine the Biblical evidence

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1906, pp.328ff. See also J. Blenkinsopp, Gibeon and Israel, Cambridge, 1972, p.15 and refs. in n.4.

78. R. de Vaux, 'Les Hurrites de l'histoire et les Horites de la Bible', RB 74, 1967, pp.482-503, esp. pp.486ff. Cf. B. Moritz, 'Edomitische Genealogien', ZAW 44, 1926, pp.81-93; W. F. Albright, 'The Horites in Palestine', From the Pyramids to Paul, New York, 1935, pp.21ff.
79. Op.cit., pp.17f.
80. In the lists of pre-Israelite inhabitants of Palestine, the Perizzites are usually next to the Hivites: Ex.iii.8,17; xxxiii.2; xxxiv.11; Dt.vii.1; xx.17; Jo.iii.11; ix.1; Jdg.iii.5; 1 Ki.ix.20; 2 Chr.viii.7.
81. Blenkinsopp, op.cit., p.113 n.14 gives refs.
82. See refs. in Blenkinsopp, op.cit., p.113 n.25, and the two following notes.

concerning the families and connections of the few known early inhabitants of Gibeon and its neighbours, and the occurrences of the towns themselves in the clan genealogies<sup><83></sup>. In such exercises there is always a danger of seeing patterns in the wallpaper. However, it does seem to emerge that there is "an interesting overlap with names in Edom and in the region south of Judah." Since the Gibeonites, at one end of the 'overlap', are Hivites, it follows that the southern region is also Hivite, at least to some extent.

But what are the Hivites? In our discussion of the 'cities of the Levites', we have inclined to the view that these Levites were not an ethnic or tribal group, but that the term indicated a type of relationship with Israel; and in this we were encouraged by the range of meanings which could be drawn from the root (or roots) lwh. The Hivites, however, are presented in the Bible as a tribe or race, like the Horites, the Canaanites and the Jebusites; and we do not hear of them at all elsewhere. The fact that no obvious etymology presents itself tends to confirm that 'Hivite' is not a description, but simply a proper name. BDB and Moritz<sup><84></sup> suggest a connection with the root of חִי, as in 'Havvoth-Jair'. This group of towns is in Gilead; if it is connected at all with 'Hivites', it gives us our sole direct evidence of this people east of the Jordan. It also suggests a meaning for

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83. Op.cit., pp.23-26. Cf. below, p.282 and n.96, for genealogical connections between Benjamin and the north.

84. Moritz, op.cit., p.93; Albright, 'The Horites in Palestine', p.24



the term: some sort of association of small towns, apparently under a central authority. But the link is tenuous. Blenkinsopp remarks that "the Avvim mentioned in Deut.ii.23 and Joshua xiii are translated in LXX by Εὐαίτοι, which also serves for Hivites (Hebrew 'wy cf. hwy), though we have no means of establishing any further relation between the two groups."<sup>85</sup> If these Avvim are indeed Hivites, then we have some direct evidence for their being settled in the south and west. 'Avvim' occurs also as a place-name in Benjamin<sup>86</sup>, and 'Avith' in Edom<sup>87</sup>. Finally, Speiser has drawn into the discussion the name of a Hyksos group, 'awwim, and the Hurrian personal name hu(w)ya<sup>88</sup>. The weight of what little evidence there is favours an ethnic sense for 'Hivite'.

What is the relation between the Hivites and the Hurrians? Both seem to be racial groups, and they both seem to be found in the same areas. If the evidence for Horites = Hurrians in the south is acceptable, it is strong for their presence in the north and in certain cities of central Palestine in the late second millennium<sup>89</sup>. In the biblical text, Hivites and Horites are never found side by side in the same paragraph; so the way is open to regard them as alternative names for the

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85. Op.cit., p.19.

86. Jo.xviii.23

87. Gen xxxvi.35

88. E. A. Speiser, 'Ethnic Movements in the Near East', AASOR 13, 1933, p.30 n.67. See also Blenkinsopp, op.cit., p.19.

89. E. A. Speiser, 'The Hurrians', Cahiers d'Histoire Mondiale I.2, 1953, pp.318ff.; Mullo Weir, 'Nuzi', in D. Winton Thomas (ed.), Archaeology and Old Testament Study, Oxford, 1967, esp. p.81; J. N. Schofield, art. 'Megiddo' in the same volume, p.317.

same group<sup><90></sup>. As we have seen, both names appear, widely separated, in the genealogical material concerning Edom in Gen. xxxvi, so the tradition agrees that they belong at least in similar contexts. Blenkinsopp approaches this conclusion with great caution. "While it would be rash simply to equate Hivites with Horites-Hurrians, with or without the help of arbitrary textual emendation, it would seem reasonable to suppose some connection between them even if the nature of this association cannot be precisely defined"<sup><91></sup>. Mullo Weir is bolder: "Since Hivites are unheard of outside the Old Testament, their equation with Hurrians, or a particular group of Hurrians, seems plausible"<sup><92></sup>.

The areas of this Hivite-Horite influence, as recorded in the Bible, agree remarkably in north, south and especially in central Palestine with the 'cities of the Levites'. Is it possible that the title of the list of cities was corrupted, perhaps in the course of transcription in the Jerusalem archives; that such a phrase as ערים לחוי <sup><93></sup> was mistaken for ערי הלוי? This is perhaps not too far-fetched, in view of the textual corruption of several of the city names within the

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90. The one possible exception is Dt.ii.22f., where Horites and Avvim occur in the same context (see n.76 above).

91. Op.cit., p.18

92. Loc.cit. Speiser regards the name 'Hivite' as probably originating in a Hebrew textual corruption (ערי misread as חוי). It would be assisted by the popular etymology of 'Horite' = hole-dweller, which was obviously inappropriate for this civilised people. However, he admits the alternative possibility that they might be a Hurrian clan ('The Hurrians', p.30).

93. Speiser would no doubt wish us to go a step further, and see the original title as ערים לחוי.

list. In this way, what had been a table of Hivite towns would become, at a stroke, a list of Levite cities.

If this is accepted, a number of things slip into place. First, we are happy to lose one of the three separate and unrelated usages of 'Levi' in the Old Testament<sup>94</sup>. Second, the surprising extent of the city list to north and south is explained, or at least related to another group known to have occupied the same regions. Third, the city list may perhaps make some contribution to our knowledge of the Hivites. And fourth, the terms in which the list is introduced in 1 Chr.vi.39 become intelligible.

Of these points, the first needs no elaboration. For the second, we suggested above that both in Asher and in the clans of southern Judah the 'Levite' alliances were made before these groups became part of Israel. If it is at all strange that independent tribal groups, only remotely related, should use a treaty form so nearly standard that a consolidated list of 'Levite cities' could subsequently be produced for all Israel, then this stumbling-block is reduced when the list is seen as a catalogue of Hivite cities.

As for the third, many of the conclusions we reached for the 'cities of the Levites' will still hold. The one major difference in the argument is that, whereas we took the term 'Levite' to be descriptive, and used its meaning in support of our case, the word 'Hivite' is simply a proper name. On

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94. See above, p.274.

the other hand, we have been able to draw upon Biblical traditions of covenants with Hivites<sup><95></sup>, and of Hivite links with areas in the north, south and centre of Palestine. We have also observed that the Hivites seem to be Horites. One should not of course imagine that every inhabitant of a Hivite town was a thoroughbred Hivite-Horite. Hurrian stock was mixed in its homeland, and much diluted by the time it reached the dates and latitudes with which we are concerned. It can have comprised little more than an ethos - a style of life and government, and an awareness of being different from others. To the outside observer, this ethos would appear little different from that of the other widely-spread urban populations; so it is not surprising if in the Bible there is some confusion between the terms Hivite, Horite, Hittite, Amorite and Canaanite. Indeed, sometimes the distinction between Amorite and Canaanite seems to be one of literary style rather than of substance<sup><96></sup>. Nevertheless, the members of such a group were conscious of their connections even with widely scattered branches of the race. Within Israel, the memory of a kinship with Edom and with Aram was enshrined in the stories of Jacob and of Esau, and of Jacob and Laban. On a smaller scale, Yeivin has conducted a thorough investigation of the genealogical material in 1 Chr.i-ix. One of his findings, that several families of Asher have connections with Benjamin or the southern border country of Ephraim; one or two, with clans of south Judah; and scarcely any elsewhere, is perhaps of relevance to our

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95. In particular, Jo.xi.19.

96. Blenkinsopp, op.cit., p.22 and n.40

study, since these are the three main 'Hivite' areas<97>.

Asher itself must of course be distinguished from the Canaanites or Hivites, among whom he dwelt. Nevertheless, in his long and chequered history there was plenty of opportunity for intermarriage and blending with the local population. The fact that the tribe bore the name of a Canaanite god shows that such influence was more than superficial. Indeed, it raises questions about the origin of Asher, into which we cannot enter here<98>.

Finally, this hypothesis is the first to give a satisfactory explanation of the terms in which the 'Levite' city list is introduced in 1 Chr.vi.39: "These are their dwelling places according to their settlements within their boundaries."<99>

מוֹשְׁבוֹת, 'dwelling places', may be a colourless term, but גְּבוּלָם, 'their boundaries', which also occurs later in the chapter<100>, is vastly more appropriate for the territory

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97. Yeivin, The Israelite Conquest, pp.12, 162ff.

98. One question we cannot avoid concerns the 'Levite' of Jdg.xixf. It would be drastic surgery to try to make him a Hivite too. And little would be gained; 'Hivite' being an ethnic term, the prime responsibility to avenge him would fall on his kith and kin. It would be altogether too sophisticated to argue that, as the outrage was committed on her territory, Israel took the responsibility for punishing it and cleansing her soil. In fact, it was the 'Levite' who took the initiative and called Israel to arms.

On the other hand, the hypothesis leaves us no worse off here than most other theories. The 'Levite' of the story does not appear to be a priest. It would seem then that he must be one of the last remnants of the secular tribe of Levi, which was so feeble and dispersed by now that it had no corporate power or voice in Israel. This is a less colourful and attractive interpretation than we advanced above; but perhaps it has the merits of conservatism and economy.

99. See pp.92ff.

100. V.51; see ch. III for textual evidence of the term in Jo.xxi.

of an ethnic group than for a scattering of places in which a certain type of person had special rights. And the unusual term מִשְׁכָּנֵי, 'settlements', may be particularly apt for the 'Hivites', if both words have a root meaning 'circle of tent dwellings' <101>.

The one conclusion from this study to which no doubt attaches is, that it has not illuminated the history of the Levites as we hoped at the outset. At most, it has demonstrated a special use of the term, unrelated to all others, which was current in the years before the monarchy. But if there is any value in our final conjecture, we have done no more than to remove from Levite history a chapter to which it had no true claim <102>.

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101. See above, p.92, and lexica s.v. מִשְׁכָּנֵי and מִשְׁכָּן.

102. 'To-day we are further than ever from any knowledge of the life and activity of the pre-exilic Levites, and of their cultic functions and their history' (G. von Rad, Old Testament Theology I, E.T. 1962, p.71 n.5).

## APPENDIX

## THE CITY NAMES

v.	<u>Joshua xxi</u>			<u>1 Chronicles vi</u>			Elsewhere in Joshua
	MT	A	B	MT	A	B	
13	קִבְרֹן	χεβρων	χεβρων	קִבְרֹן	χεβρων	χεβρων	xv. 54
	לְבָנָה	λεβνα	λεμνα	לְבָנָה	λοβνα	λοβνα	xv. 42
14	יֶתֶר	εθερ	αιλωμ	יֶתֶר	ηγλων	σελνα	xv. 48
	אֶשְׁתָּמֶלֶךְ	εσθεμω	τεμα	אֶשְׁתָּמֶלֶךְ	εσθεμω	εσθεμω	xv. 50
15	חֶלֶץ	ωλων	γελλα	חֶלֶץ	εθερ	εθερα	חלץ
	דָּבָר	δωβερ	δωβερ	דָּבָר	δωβερ	δωβερ	דבר
16	יָצַח	αιν	ασα	יָצַח	ασων	ασων	xv. 32, xix. 7
	יָצַח	—	τανυ	יָצַח	βαιθσαμυς	ατταν	xv. 42, xv. 55
17	בֵּית שִׁמְשֹׁן	βαιθσαμυς	βαιθσαμυς	בֵּית שִׁמְשֹׁן	βαιθθηρ	βαιθσαμυς	xv. 10
	גִּבְעָה	γαβων	γαβων	גִּבְעָה	γαβεε	γαβαι	xviii. 25
18	תַּחֲתֵי	γασεε	γασεε	תַּחֲתֵי	γαλημεθ	γαλημεθ	xviii. 24
	יָצַח	ανωθωθ	ανωθωθ	יָצַח	ανωθωθ	αρχαχ	

21	נִשְׁכֵּם גִּזְרִי	συχεμ γασερ	συχεμ γασερ	נִשְׁכֵּם גִּזְרִי	συχεμ γασερ	(xvii.7) xvi.3, 10
22	קִבְּצֵי־ם בֵּית חֹרֶן	καβσαιμι הנ באיθאנ: הן באיθאנ	καβσαιμι הנ באיθאנ	קִבְּצֵי־ם בֵּית חֹרֶן	καβσαιμι הנ באיθאנ	xviii.14
23	אֶלְתִּיקָא גִּבְתָּן	ελθικα גאנ	ελθικα גאנ	אֶלְתִּיקָא גִּבְתָּן	ελθικα גאנ	xix.44 xix.44
24	אֶלְלֹן גַּת־רֶפּוֹן	αλλων גאנ	αλλων גאנ	אֶלְלֹן גַּת־רֶפּוֹן	αλλων גאנ	xix.42 xix.45
25	תַּעֲנִיךְ גַּת־רֶפּוֹן	θαναχ גאנ	θαναχ גאנ	תַּעֲנִיךְ גַּת־רֶפּוֹן	θαναχ גאנ	xviii.11
27	גִּלְיוֹן בְּעֶשְׂתֵּי־רֶדֶד	גאנ באנ	גאנ באנ	גִּלְיוֹן בְּעֶשְׂתֵּי־רֶדֶד	גאנ באנ	צִשְׁתֵּי־רֶדֶד xiii.31
28	קִשְׂיוֹן דִּבְרֵת	קאנ דאנ	קאנ דאנ	קִשְׂיוֹן דִּבְרֵת	קאנ דאנ	xix.20 xix.12
29	יֶרֶם־וִית לִי־ן גִּנְיִם	ימנ לנ	ימנ לנ	יֶרֶם־וִית לִי־ן גִּנְיִם	ימנ לנ	xv.35; cf. xix.21 xv.36; xix.21
30	כִּשְׂאֵל עֶבְדִּי	כאנ אנ	כאנ אנ	כִּשְׂאֵל עֶבְדִּי	כאנ אנ	xix.26 אנ



31	קִלְקַת יְחִיב קִדְּשׁ קַפֹּת דִּיאֵר	θελκαθ ρωβ κεδεις εμμασθαρ νοεμμων	χελκατ ραβ καδεις νεμματο θεμμων	60	קוקר יְחִיב קִדְּשׁ קַפֹּן קִרְיָתִים	ιακα ρωβ κεδεις χαμων καριοθαιμ ιακομαν καδης	ιακα ρωβ κεδεις χαμων καριοθαιμ ιακομαν καδης	xix. 25; cf. xix. 34 xix. 28 xix. 37 xix. 28 (Asher) xix. 11
34	קִרְיָתִין יְקִנְעָם קִרְיָתָה יְמִנָה נְהַלְלָה בְּעָר יְהִצֵּה קִדְמוֹת מִיפְעֹת רְמֹת מִחְגֵּי קִשְׁבֹּן יְעִי	εκναμ καρα δαμνα νααλλα βοσσρ ιαζη γεδσαν μασφα ραμωθ μανοιμ εσεβων ιαζη	μαν καδης σαλλα βοσσρ ιαζη δεκμων μαφα ραμωθ καμιν εσβων ιαζη	62 63 64 65 66	רפוןו תבזר בְּעָר יְהִצֵּה קִדְמוֹת מִיפְעֹת רְמֹת מִחְגֵּי קִשְׁבֹּן יְעִי	ρεμμων θαρχεια βοσσρ ιασα καμηδωθ φασθ ραμωθ μανοιμ εσεβων ραζερ	ρεμμων θαρχεια βοσσρ ιασα καμηδωθ φασθ ραμωθ μανοιμ εσεβων ραζερ	cf. xv. 32 (Simeon) xix. 15 xiii. 18 xiii. 18 xiii. 18 xiii. 26, 30 xiii. 26, etc. xiii. 25

### Notes on the city names

The table gives the Masoretic text of the Levite city names in Joshua and Chronicles, as represented by Biblia Hebraica (3rd edition), and the versions in LXX A (Alexandrinus) and B (Vaticanus). The final column notes occurrences of the names in Jo,xiii-xix.

Some of the points which arise are treated in the text of this study. Others are briefly mentioned in the notes below. For convenience, these are arranged under the verse numbers of Jo,xxi.

References to 'Albright' are to his article 'The List of Levitical Cities' (Louis Ginzberg Jubilee Volume 1, pp.49-73, New York, 1945), to which these notes are deeply indebted.

14. The LXX versions, except A of Joshua, seem to have interchanged Jattir and Holon.
15. 'Gella', in LXX B of Joshua, is a virtual dittograph of the preceding word (ΓΕΛΛΑ from ΤΕΜΑ).
16. Ain and Ashan are both listed as cities of Simeon in 1 Chr. iv,32, and perhaps also in Jo,xix,7. Ain normally precedes Rimmon in these lists, and in Jo,xix,7 the two words seem to compose one compound place-name, 'En-rimmon'.

Other LXX MSS of Joshua give ΙΣΤΤΑ for Jutta.

The Βε.007ρ of LXX A of Chr. represents Beth-ter, Bar-Kokhba's stronghold.

18. Joshua reverses the order of the names in Chronicles (or vice versa). LXX A of Chr. inserts ΛΑΒΕΕ (a dittograph of ΛΑΒΕΕ) between Alemeth and Anathoth.

"The variants of the LXX show that we must correct the Hebrew למלך into למלך, which is preserved in Chronicles" (Albright, n.x). Cf. also the forms in the Gibeonite genealogies, 1 Chr.viii,36; ix,42; and see Rothstein, commentary, ad loc.

22. LXX V of Chronicles reads יֵשׁוּעַ. Joshua's reading may be a corruption of this (omitting י by haplography after י - cf. יֵשׁוּעַ for יֵשׁוּעַ - and giving ש for ש; this is not uncommon, and would facilitate the change of ש to ש). Jokneam is not attested elsewhere, but Albright (n.cc) shows grounds for believing it to be an ancient name.

25. Chr. has lost ת by haplography (from ת-ת); the ת is a scribal error for ת.

MT of Joshua repeats Gath-rimmon from the previous verse. LXX MSS A, V and W give versions of Beth-shan. B's ΙΕΒΑΘΑ "is a transparent corruption of the correct ΙΕΒΛΑΑ(Μ)" (Albright, n.mm).

27. Golan and Bezer appear elsewhere only in the lists of 'cities of refuge', Dt.iv.43 and Jo.xx.8. Ramoth would be in the same position, if it did not also appear in two passages in Kings (//Chr.).

LXX V and W of Joshua read Βεεζορ. The initial B- is probably an abbreviation of Beth-. LXX B of Chr. resembles the Hazeroth mentioned in Num.xi.35; xii.16; xxxiii.17f.; Dt.i.1. LXX A seems to relate to v.58.

28. There is no reference elsewhere to a Kedesh in Issachar. LXX B of Joshua suggests that the place name here should be Kishon, like the name of the stream. Albright (n.ss) finds it attested in 15th-century Egyptian lists as Qi-su-na.

29. Jarmuth in Judah occurs five times in Joshua and once in Nehemiah. There is no other trace of a Jarmuth in Issachar. Here the name is probably an error for Remeth, or possibly Ramoth (cf. LXX B; Jo.xix.21; 1 Chr.vi.58).

Albright argues, against the evidence here and in Jo.xix.21, that we should read ענ-גנים in place of En-gannim (see his note in ZAW, 1926, pp.231f.).

30. Abdon is not elsewhere a place name. Cf. Jdg.xii.13; 1 Chr.viii.30; ix.36.

31. Hukkok is on the border of Naphtali (Jo.xix.34). An editor may have altered this to Helkath, a city of Asher (Jo.xix.25), in the course of adapting the city list to the tribal pattern.

32. The initial letter of וְיִשְׁמָעֵאל arises from dittography with the preceding וְיִשְׁמָעֵאל.

34. Kartah is "certainly a misplaced reminiscence" of Kartan or, in some of the LXX versions, of Kedesh (both in v.32; Albright, nn.9,10). The name is not attested elsewhere.

35. The Old Latin of Joshua, which is generally dependent on LXX B, gives 'Remmon'.

36. See note on v.27, above.

The LXX versions of Joshua seem to represent Jazer (v.39) rather than Jahaz.

38. See note on v.27, above.

39. The LXX of Chronicles is influenced by the familiar name Gezer.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

<u>AASOR</u>	<u>Annual of the American Schools of Oriental Research</u>
<u>AJSL</u>	<u>American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures</u>
ANVO	Avhandlinger utgitt av det Norsk Videnskaps-Akademi i Oslo, Hist.-Filos. Klasse
AT	Arbeiten zur Theologie
ATD	Das Alte Testament Deutsch
<u>BASOR</u>	<u>Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research</u>
BET	Beiträge zur evangelische Theologie
BFCT	Beiträge zur Förderung christlicher Theologie
BHTh	Beiträge zur historischen Theologie
BWA(N)T	Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten (und Neuen) Testament
BZAW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
CAT	Commentaire de l'Ancien Testament
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments
HAT	Handbuch zum Alten Testament
HK	Handkommentar
HSAT	Die Heilige Schrift des Alten Testaments
<u>HUCA</u>	<u>Hebrew Union College Annual</u>
ICC	International Critical Commentary
<u>IEJ</u>	<u>Israel Exploration Journal</u>
<u>JAOS</u>	<u>Journal of the American Oriental Society</u>
<u>JBL</u>	<u>Journal of Biblical Literature</u>
<u>JNES</u>	<u>Journal of Near Eastern Studies</u>
<u>JQR</u>	<u>Jewish Quarterly Review</u>

<u>JSS</u>	<u>Journal of Semitic Studies</u>
KAT	Kommentar zum Alten Testament
KEH	Kurzgefasstes exegetisches Handbuch zum Alten Testament
KHC	Kurzer Hand-Commentar
<u>K.S.</u>	A. Alt, <u>Kleine Schriften</u> I, II, Munich, 1953
OTL	Old Testament Library
<u>PEQ</u>	<u>Palestine Exploration Quarterly</u>
<u>RB</u>	<u>Revue Biblique</u>
<u>RGG</u>	<u>Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart</u>
<u>RSR</u>	<u>Revue des Sciences Religieuses</u>
SAT	Die Schriften des Alten Testaments
SBT	Studies in Biblical Theology
SHAW	Sitzungsberichte der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philologisch-historische Klasse
SKG	Schriften der Königsberger gelehrten Gesellschaft, Geisteswissenschaftliche Klasse
SOTS	Society for Old Testament Study monograph series
SPAW	Sitzungsberichte der Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philologisch-historische Klasse
<u>ThLZ</u>	<u>Theologische Literaturzeitung</u>
<u>ThR</u>	<u>Theologische Rundschau</u>
<u>ThZ</u>	<u>Theologische Zeitschrift</u>
UUA	Uppsala Universitets Arsskrift
<u>VT</u>	<u>Vetus Testamentum</u>
VTS	Supplements to Vetus Testamentum
<u>ZAW</u>	<u>Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</u>
<u>ZDPV</u>	<u>Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästinavereins</u>

BH	R. Kittel (ed.), <u>Biblia Hebraica</u> , Stuttgart, 3rd ed. 1937 onwards												
E.T.	English translation												
EVV	English versions												
LXX	The Septuagint												
	<table><tr><td>Codices:</td><td>A</td><td>Alexandrinus</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>B</td><td>Vaticanus</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>V</td><td>Venetus</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>W</td><td>Freer</td></tr></table>	Codices:	A	Alexandrinus		B	Vaticanus		V	Venetus		W	Freer
Codices:	A	Alexandrinus											
	B	Vaticanus											
	V	Venetus											
	W	Freer											
MT	The Masoretic Text												
NEB	New English Bible												
RSV	Revised Standard Version												